



THE INDEPENDENT

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28-PAGE NEWS SECTION

England's great escape

WITH 9 PAGES OF SPORT

24-PAGE BROADSHEET REVIEW

Terrorism's Arthur Daley

TUESDAY REVIEW FRONT

The perils of perfume

HEALTH PLUS ARTS, COMMENT & MEDIA

A day of confrontation. A night of terror. In Ulster, the fear is back

THE COLD statistics convey the ugliness of it all: 384 outbreaks of disorder in 24 hours; 115 attacks on the security forces; 19 police injured, one suffering a fractured skull. Petrol bombs were thrown on 96 occasions, 403 petrol bombs were seized, 57 homes and businesses damaged, 27 vehicles were hijacked and another 89 damaged.

Northern Ireland is once again in the grip of widespread loyalist disorder as the Drumcree marching stand-off continues with no end in sight. And the impasse has only just begun. Everyone expects it to get worse as the week goes on.

But even those statistics, which cover the period until 6am yesterday, do not tell the whole story. For the fear is back—the apprehension which last night kept hundreds of

Protestants all over the city and can easily interfere with major thoroughfares. They also have the numbers to ensure that police and troops are kept at full stretch. As a result most of Belfast was last night virtually deserted as news spread that the roadblocks had sprung up again, as they had during previous stand-offs at Drumcree and on other occasions when Protestant opinion became inflamed.

Even a simple car journey can take on a nightmarish aspect. Those manning the roadblocks are not polite men in suits: often they are belligerent teenagers spoiling for a fight. Sometimes they are drunk. At times like these, many of society's normal rules go by the board, as youths with cudgels become temporary rulers of their districts and its roads.

Thus people on a routine car journey can suddenly come face to face with the prospect of anarchy and mob rule, of fiery threats, of the loss of their vehicle or worse. Many of the protesters believe in their cause and the Drumcree issue; but many are excitedly pouring out of the back streets, revelling in the belief that their community has given the go-ahead for law-breaking.

The announcement that a loyalist parade would be allowed to pass along the Ormeau Road in Belfast on 13 July did little to ease tensions.

The pattern is familiar in Belfast, though many had hoped the city had seen the last of pockets of nocturnal burnings and rioting, surrounded by much larger areas filled with apprehension and fear. Loyalist disorder is proving again to be much more destabilising and unifying than nationalist rioting.

Republican ghettos, as the term implies, tend to be well-de-

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent



Orangemen waiting and watching at the Drumcree stand-off. Marchers say they will stay 'as long as it takes' to get the parade through

David Rose

thousands of people behind locked doors in their homes. Disturbances broke out late yesterday afternoon with buses and other vehicles hijacked and set on fire in Belfast, Co Antrim, and Co Down. With Orangemen settling in for a long siege at Drumcree itself, where things are peaceful, everyone expects the situation elsewhere to deteriorate.

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fined, easily skirted and relatively manageable for the security forces to contain at times of unrest. But when loyalist Belfast takes to the streets, as happened on Sunday night and again last night, the disruption is far more widespread.

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city and can easily interfere with major thoroughfares. They also have the numbers to ensure that police and troops are kept at full stretch. As a result most of Belfast was last night virtually deserted as news spread that the roadblocks had sprung up again, as they had during previous stand-offs at Drumcree and on other occasions when Protestant opinion became inflamed.

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The lesson from the many precedents is that there is no way of controlling widespread loyalist protests. The Orange Order calls for support for its Drumcree struggle, then condemns the violence that results and blames the disorder on the authorities.

But the violence has come as a surprise to no one, for it invariably accompanies protests such as these. Once the loyal-

ists take to the streets, discipline disappears, cars get hijacked and torched, and the fear spreads.

Not everywhere goes up in flames: the full-scale clashes between the youths and police are reserved for the real hotspots, which this time round are Sandy Row in Belfast, Londonderry, and the town of Carrickfergus in Co Antrim. When places like these are seething sensible people go nowhere

near them. But the fear is everywhere: most people get to work in the mornings, but the charred vehicles at the roadside and the scars where the tarmac has boiled serve as ugly reminders of the power of the mob, and of the dark forces that can be unleashed in times of Protestant crisis.

Behind the scenes, efforts go on to find a way out. David Trimble, who was once identified with Drumcree, but is now—as

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New lobbying links embarrass Labour

BY FRAN ABRAMS
AND DAISY SAMPSON

MINISTERS WERE embroiled in a deepening crisis last night as new links emerged between Labour and the lobbying industry.

As Downing Street sought to damp down the crisis yesterday it emerged that Derek Draper, a lobbyist and former aide to Peter Mandelson who is accused of offering access for cash, is planning a series of seminars with ministers.

Roger Liddle, Mr Draper's former business partner who

now works in the Downing Street policy unit, will have a star turn at the seminars.

The *Independent* has learned that the seminars, which will be held around the country for Labour Party members, will be used to try to 'fix' the party's autumn conference. At a recent meeting, leaders of Mr Draper's Progress organisation discussed how they would use the

Welsh Office minister.

workshops to identify sympathisers and then prime them to support Tony Blair at Blackpool. Among the ministers billed to appear at the seminars were Chris Smith, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport; John Reid, a Defence minister; George Howarth and Joyce Quinn, two Home Office ministers; Derek Fatchett, a Foreign Office minister; and Tony Worthington, a Northern Ireland minister.

Unfortunately what it failed to do was liaise with the local party. So when the media checked early yesterday morning to make sure Mr Hague would indeed be there, there was a note of puzzlement in the

official's voice. "Er no, sorry. We are not expecting him until 4pm this afternoon," he said.

Confused? So were we. A call to the pavilion itself did not help. Yes, Mr Hague was expected, but not until the afternoon.

A call to the CCO was even more confusing. "No, Mr Hague will be there at 10am," insisted a spokesperson. "Of course I am sure." To prove the point, they

Birmingham, Newcastle, Liverpool and Sheffield. Afterwards, Progress members plan to single out Blairites for special attention in advance of the party conference.

The new revelations came as Mr Draper was suspended by his employer, GPC Market Access, and a former adviser to Gordon Brown, Karl Milner, was humiliated by his firm after leaking a select committee report before its publication.

Mr Milner, a lobbyist with

GJW, may now face a grilling by the trade and industry committee about the incident. Wif Weeks, GJW's chairman, has promised an internal investigation with a view to taking disciplinary action and apologised on Mr Milner's behalf.

The lobbyists' professional body, the Association of Professional Political Consultants, also condemned the apparent breaches. It said it would write today to GPC and GJW demanding an explanation.

Tories in a spin as William goes missing

BY ANDREW BUNCOMBE

TO HER credit, the woman at Conservative Central Office was refreshingly honest.

"We don't know where he is. We know he is with his press officer, but we don't know where," she said.

Poor William Hague. Where he should have been yesterday morning was on his way to the Pavilion Gardens at Buxton, Derbyshire, for a function with

Nicholas Kenyon will step down two years early from the post of Radio 3 controller

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Labour plans to create a Cabinet post of party chairman to lead the next election campaign

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Opponents of Australia's Aboriginal land rights law launched a last-ditch battle to scuttle the bill

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The financial services industry is braced for a sharp slowdown later this year

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Ronnie Sullivan has forfeited £61,000 in prize money after testing positive for cannabis

PAGE 22

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A classical dilemma for the BBC as Radio 3's controller walks out

NICHOLAS KENYON yesterday stepped down two years early, from the post of controller of BBC Radio 3.

His successor will need a love of classical music, an eclectic interest in the arts, which will cover the station's speech and drama output, and a serviceable flak jacket.

As even the affable and expert Nick Kenyon discovered, running the BBC's classical music station in the era of Classic FM puts you or a hiding to nothing.

On the one side, you have the BBC radio controller Matthew Bannister, late of Radio One and deeply conscious of cost, ratings and Classic FM.

On the other, you have the Radio 3 lobby, diehard traditionalists who see even the moderate compromises Kenyon made to more populist programming as betrayal and dumbing down.

Kenyon has extricated himself from the station rather brilliantly. He has kept the directorship of the Proms, something he desperately wanted to retain. And he has landed a prestigious if time-limited new post, co-ordinating all the Corporation's programming on radio and television related to the millennium, starting in the autumn of 1999 and lasting throughout 2000.

He said last night: "I can't think of a more welcome adventure than the millennium alongside my continuing commitment to the Proms."

But if Kenyon has managed a graceful exit, that cannot disguise the continuing dilemma of Radio 3: the BBC's most expensive station, yet the one with the smallest reach. It costs £58.4m a year to entertain and educate 2.6 million listeners. Classic FM, as Kenyon grew sick of hearing, has 5 million listeners.

To take one staggering statistic, it costs £1.8m to maintain the BBC orchestras, more than the Arts Council spends on orchestras throughout the country. Kenyon fought hard to stop the BBC axing at least one and probably more of the orchestras. He counts it one of his great successes.

He can also point to the retention of live music as the kernel of the network, the championing of new work and large thematic projects, such as Fairest Isle for the Purcell tercentenary, and Sounding The Century, a celebration of 20th-century work.

Friends of Kenyon say he used to despair of having Classic FM rammed down his throat at every performance re-

BY DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

iota. What I've done is to change the way we talk about it and, of course, people pay far more attention to that."

Whether Radio 3 can post-Kenyon stick to its live music, new music, complete works and speech and drama remit, is the big question. While Kenyon's graceful exit means he will not fire any broadsides at the BBC hierarchy, there is little doubt that he and Bannister had markedly different visions for the station, and that there were people even in Radio 3 who wanted to take the Bannister route to higher ratings and greater economies.

The Radio 3 executive Hilary Boulding is said to agree with the Bannister approach; and if she is appointed as Kenyon's successor, changes in the station's approach are likely.

Programmes such as *Minning The Archives*, which for example looked at the influence of great violinists of the past, used an expertise and the resource of the BBC library that Classic FM does not have.

What is clear is that Kenyon's personality – charming, eager to please and cautious – was part of his slow downfall at Radio 3. BBC management compared him adversely to James Boyle at Radio 4, who rushed changes through in 12 months, while still going through at least the appearance of a consultation process. Kenyon's changes were more gradual, yet he still seemed to attract criticism from a lobby every bit as vociferous and articulate as the Radio 4 listeners.

Tony Scotland, a presenter for 20 years, accused him of ending the tradition by which "one listened and learnt, and looked up later, perhaps, what the context occasionally failed to explain. The scholarship was lightly worn, the tone was authoritative but never intimidating, and the announcers spoke directly to us, as friends, in civilised and articulate English." A headline in the *Spectator* used a classical music allusion to make its point more succinctly: "Diminished Third".

But Kenyon never perhaps got the credit for keeping the cost-cutters and Classic FM wannabes at bay. He was always a rarity in the BBC hierarchy, refreshingly relaxed, candid and jargon free, and often as stamboolic looking as when he loped into the *Observer* office with his satchel.

As he said to me not long ago: "Remember, this was the time when we could have been decimated by an easy alternative. We haven't been. And I've been absolutely rigorous in not changing the demanding and adventurous repertory by one

point more succinctly."

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Nicholas Kenyon, whose eager-to-please personality was part of his downfall at Radio 3

Kalpesh Lathigra

FAVOURITES TO SUCCEED

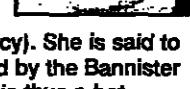
MICHAEL BERKELEY
Composer and presenter of the Radio 3 programme *Private Passions*. A classical composer running Radio 3 would have Lord Reith smiling in his grave.



ELAINE PADMORE
Opera director. She runs the Danish Royal Opera, and before that directed the Wexford festival. If a critic can run the station for six years, why not an opera producer?



HILARY BOULDING
Already on the staff at Radio 3, where she has the slightly opaque title of Commissioning Editor. Music (Policy). She is said to be favoured by the Bannister camp, and is thus a hot favourite, brackets or no brackets.



DAVID MELLOR
Has one of the largest CD collections in the country and could make a post-modern synergy between classical music and football. Classical music also badly needs a phone-in programme.



JAMES NAUGHTIE
Grilling politicians may be his day job, but opera and symphonies are his true loves. The people's choice.



The female verdict on Viagra – it doesn't do anything for us

CLAIMS MADE for the anti-impotence pill Viagra may be blown over.

Women partners of men who take the drug were consistently less impressed by its effects than the men, according to surveys originally left out of a scientific paper published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

The reports on Viagra's effects came from the subjective impressions of the men who took it, rather than their partners who experienced what it delivered.

Some of the NEJM's magazine's editors were also uncomfortable that the study of 532 men, published on 14 May, relied entirely on the men's opinions about how their performance improved, with no objective measurement of what occurred.

"This is the first impotence study we have published that contained no laboratory or clinic data," said Robert Utiger, the magazine's deputy editor.

"We had wondered why at least the men's partners hadn't been interviewed."

However, he said, it transpired that some of the women had been interviewed but only a minority of them had reported on the effects. "So they didn't include it in the paper."

The differences could have been significant.

Men taking Viagra reported success rates of between 49 and 73 per cent. But only 48 per cent

of the women involved thought it had been a success.

By contrast, 22 of the men receiving a simple placebo pill reported success.

Possibly the men taking Viagra were focusing on one aspect of its effect, and the women on another.

But the unpublished results also highlight the fact that the paper used subjective responses by the men to a 15-question report.

"Usually the alternative in this instance would be to include the data from the partner or from objective means," said Dr Utiger.

Previous medical studies into impotence have included results from machines which measured levels of physical arousal using a pair of wires

which clipped over the penis.

Those were entirely absent in the NEJM paper submitted by a team of doctors based at a number of sites.

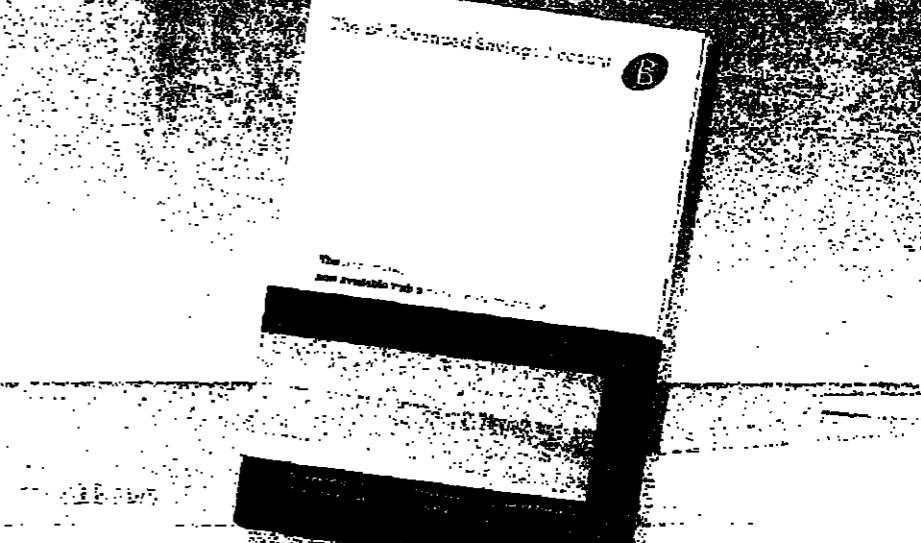
William Steers, chief of urology at the University of Virginia, headed one of the teams.

He told the *New Yorker* magazine he was "not at all happy" about the use of subjective measures, and noted that his own study of female partners' opinions, taken in the course of the larger study, showed their mark for the drug was "always lower than the men's."

Viagra, manufactured by the pharmaceuticals company Pfizer, has been a runaway hit since its launch in the US in March, when it won approval from the US Food and Drug Administration.

Business, page 14

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Roy Rogers, the singing cowboy, is dead

BY ANDREW MARSHALL
in Washington

THE LAST of the great singing cowboys has ridden off into the sunset. Roy Rogers, aged 86, died early yesterday of heart failure at his home in Apple Valley, California.

He was better known to America's younger generation for the chain of fast-food restaurants that bears his name, than for his films. But to anyone who grew up in the 1940s, he was the king of the cowboys.

Rogers was born Leonard Slye in Cincinnati, an unlikely

home for a Western hero. But he hitch-hiked west and learnt his trade the hard way on a ranch in New Mexico, before taking his singing act on the road. One day he stopped at a tailor's shop in Glendale, California, to get his ten-gallon hat mended, heard that one of the studios was looking for a singing cowboy, and never looked back.

Rogers was born Leonard Slye in Cincinnati, an unlikely

with his wife, Dale Evans, and had his own radio and television show. He would end them with his theme song, "Happy Trails to You".

Roy Rogers mythologised a way of life that had great sentimental power in America, but when he was making his films, the cowboy life was already dying out. It survives to some extent on the ranges of the West, though these days the cowboys, with their ten-gallon hats and clinking spurs, take



Rogers: king of cowboys

Identity-theft killer gets life sentence

A CANADIAN businessman, who fled to Britain with millions of dollars of his clients' money, was yesterday jailed for life for the murder of a friend whose identity he stole.

Albert Walker set up home with his daughter Sheena, who pretended to be his wife, after taking the identity of his friend, Ronald Platt, and paying for him to emigrate to Canada.

But the real Mr Platt returned to Britain when his new life turned sour and proved an "acute embarrassment" to Walker, who murdered him, Exeter Crown Court heard.

Mr Platt, 51, drowned after being weighed down with a 10lb anchor and thrown from Walker's yacht six miles off the south Devon coast. All identification had been removed, but police traced him through his Rolex watch and unravelled Walker's double life.

Walker, who was Interpol's fourth most wanted man when he was arrested, remained impulsive as the jury of eight women and four men convicted him of murdering Mr Platt, a television repair man, after just two hours of deliberation. He is also wanted in Canada to face 18 charges of fraud, theft and money laundering.

During the 11-day trial, the court heard that Walker, 52, left Canada in December 1990, with his 15-year-old daughter, the second of his four children, and booked into the Ritz Hotel under the name of David Davis. He allegedly left with "very substantial funds, not all of which belonged to him," said Charles Barton QC, for the prosecution.

In 1992, Walker met Elaine Boyes, Mr Platt's girlfriend of 10 years, in Harrogate. She revealed that her lover had lived in Canada as a teenager and wanted to return to live there.

Walker subsequently offered her a job and Miss Boyes and Mr Platt became directors of the Cavendish Corporation, an off-the-shelf company which

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

was bought, run and financed by Walker.

The following December, Walker offered them air tickets so they could go to Canada. But before the couple left, Walker claimed, Mr Platt agreed to obtain a new driving licence for him, and gave him his birth certificate and credit card, to enable him to carry on the business account. Mr Platt and Miss Boyes flew to Canada in February 1993 – after Walker had arranged to have rubber stamps made of their signatures so that, he told Miss Boyes, he could wind down the Cavendish Corporation.



Walker killed friend after stealing his identity

With Mr Platt thousands of miles away, Walker began to use his identity and by August that year he and his daughter were living in Tiverton, Devon, calling themselves Ronald J Platt and his wife Noel. In 1994, the couple moved to Woodham Walter, Essex.

Mr Platt returned from Canada in 1995 and contacted the businessman. "After Platt's return to Britain, Walker was maintaining him and seeing him weekly and there appears to have been a degree of desperation," said Mr Barton.

Walker said that in June 1996, Mr Platt agreed to go to France to look for property to project about the case.

set up a business there. In early July, Walker took Mr Platt to south Devon, where his yacht was moored. On 20 July 1996 the two Ronald Platts went sailing. Only one of them returned.

The real Mr Platt drowned after being hit over the head and pitched overboard with the anchor through his belt. It was sheer coincidence that a Brixham trawler was working in the spot where the body had been dumped and fished it up eight days later. The serial number of his Rolex watch eventually led police to Walker.

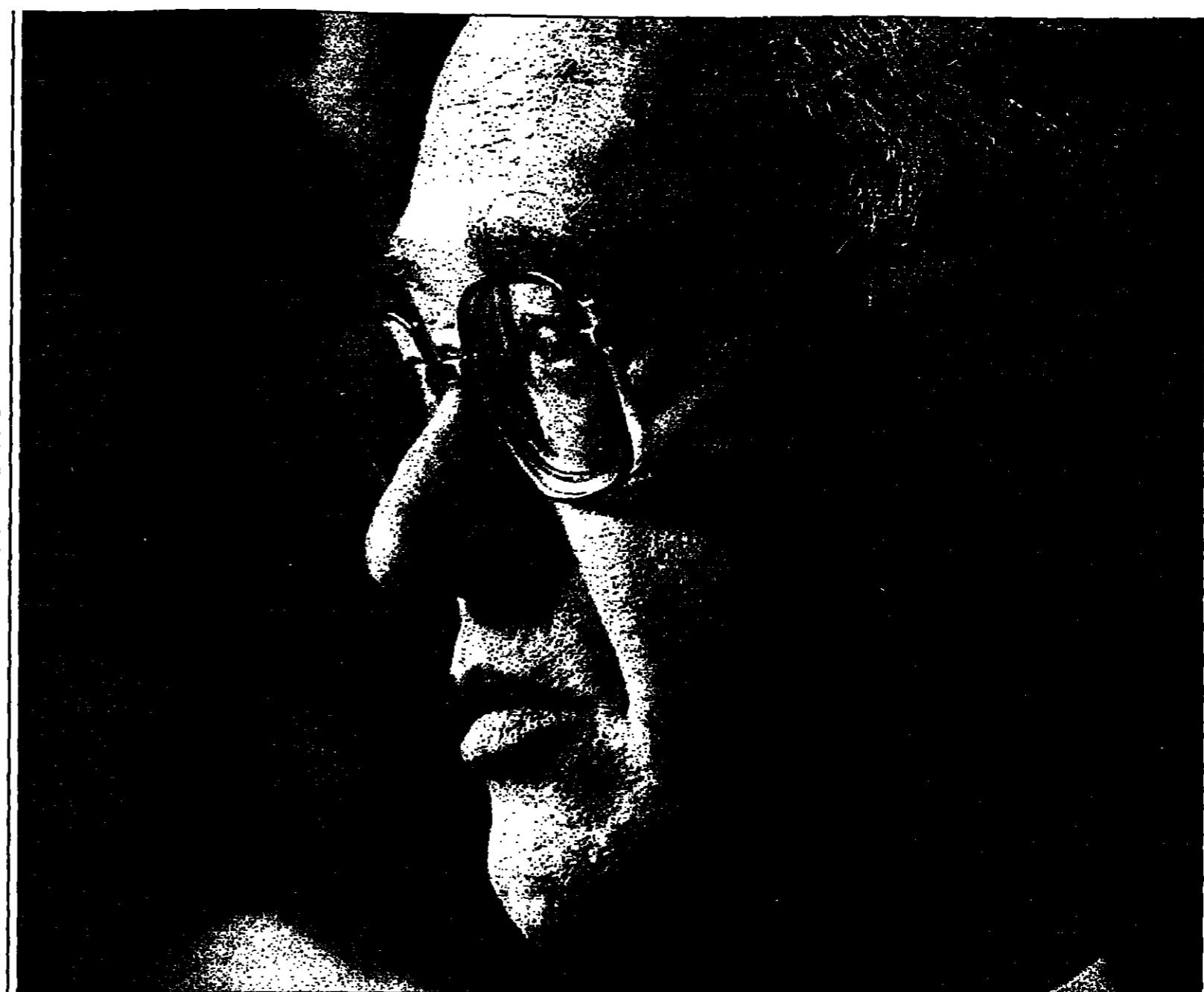
He told his daughter that Mr Platt had gone to France, and put the dead man's belongings into storage. When police arrived at the empty flat, they were given the name and mobile telephone number of a David Davis whom Mr Platt had used as a reference. Mr Davis was contacted and informed of Mr Platt's death but said that he could shed no light on it.

However, detectives decided to re-interview Mr Davis, but when they went to his rented farmhouse at Woodham Walter they knocked on the wrong door. The occupant told the officers that his neighbours were Ronald Platt and his young wife, Noel. He said he had never heard of Mr Davis – an alias that Walker had abandoned.

Walker was arrested at gunpoint after he left his home in late October 1996.

In November, Walker – still using the name David Davis – appeared before magistrates in Torquay, Devon, charged with谋杀 (murder) of Mr Platt. But a few days later Canadian police finally identified "David Davis" as Albert Walker.

After the trial, Miss Boyes said she was planning to write a book about her experiences, and the actors Susan George and her husband, Simon MacCorkindale, who attended the first day of the trial, are thought to be interested in a film project about the case.



George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, says international conference of bishops will not break down over homosexuality John Houlihan

Archbishop of Canterbury dismisses idea that gay debate will split Synod

THE ARCHBISHOP of Canterbury yesterday rejected doomsday predictions that the international gathering of 800 Anglican bishops at Lambeth Conference later this month will be torn apart by the issue of homosexuality.

At the last conference 10 years ago, the controversy was women priests; this time, it is gay priests. But Dr George Carey, who opposes the ordination of practising homosexuals, is optimistic that the subject will not prove fatal to the

BY CLARE GARNER

unity of the international Anglican Communion.

"We always come with issues like this, and to our great surprise we find ways of resolving the issue," he said at a briefing at the General Synod in York.

"For example, in 1988 some were predicting the break-up of the Anglican Communion over the ordination of women. All the forecasters may be pleasantly surprised and even some of the bishops themselves may be

coming thinking this is a crunch conference – but I don't think it will be."

Dr Carey stressed that sexuality was just one subject among many on the agenda at the three-week conference in Canterbury, Kent, which begins on Sunday 19 July. "However, it is an important subject," he conceded. "Especially for Bishops in the West."

"As you know, I take a traditional line on this, and probably the great majority of bishops adopt a similar approach.

Whatever view bishops incline to, we must listen carefully to one another knowing that this contentious issue will not be resolved by anger and bitterness, but in the context of prayer and fellowship."

Bishops taking the opposite view to Dr Carey on gay priests come mostly from the United States, where they are led by the Right Rev Jack Spong, Bishop of Newark, New Jersey, an ultra-liberal who has put the on the Internet in which he denies basic Christian doc-

trines such as the Resurrection of Christ.

Dr Carey also spoke of his delight at the "enormous success" of the international mission dubbed the Decade of Evangelism. Asked how he could take this view, given dwindling church attendance, he said: "I don't think of evangelism as just counting the scalps. It's to be an outward, confident church. This is happening, not so much in terms of numbers but in the quality of our life, leadership and clergy."

CSA reforms to simplify maintenance payments

POORER FATHERS and working mothers will lose out while richer fathers and mothers on benefit will gain under new plans for the controversial Child Support Agency unveiled by the Government yesterday.

The Green Paper, announced by Harriet Harman, Secretary of State for Social Security, involved absent fathers paying a set percentage from their net income with the emphasis on ensuring "more fathers pay, rather than that fathers pay more".

According to DSS calculations, one in four lone mothers – around 100,000 – will be worse off as a result of the changes, while fathers will, on average, see the maintenance they pay drop from £38 a week to £29.

BY GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

The CSA, which has been dogged by criticism since its inception in 1993, currently spends 90 per cent of its time assessing maintenance and only 10 per cent on collection. More than 100 pieces of information are gathered before an assessment can be made. As a result, the taxpayer is supporting more than 1.8 million children who are not receiving any maintenance from their non-resident parents. The total cost is some £10bn a year.

"Our reform of child support involves replacing the Byzantine complexity of the current formula with a simple percentage," Ms Harman told the Commons. She said that for one

child, 15 per cent will be deducted from the father's net income and paid in maintenance – rising to 20 per cent for two children and 25 per cent for three or more children.

The proposals, which should be in place by 2001, will also allow lone parents on income support to keep up to £10 a week of any maintenance paid for their children – a change from the current system where for every pound paid in maintenance by the father a pound is deducted from the mother's income support.

More than 60,000 absent parents who are currently exempt from any payment would start paying £5 a week. "Fathers on benefit have as much of a responsibility for their children's

income as those with earned income," said the Green Paper. "Personal circumstances cannot negate responsibility."

Commenting on the proposals, Maeve Sherlock, of the National Council of One Parent Families, said: "While we welcome the principle of a simple formula to ensure reliable payments, we are concerned that levels of maintenance assessment for lone parents will drop too far."

For the Liberal Democrats, David Rendel said the proposals were "full of holes". He warned: "Their rigid formula will work fairly for only a small minority of cases. For example, what about those with a variable income and the self-employed? How will unearned income be taken into account?"

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IND09

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Chaucer could fetch £500,000
ENGLAND'S FIRST major printed book – a first edition of Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* – could fetch £500,000 when it goes up for sale. Christie's said yesterday. The book, printed in 1477 by William Caxton, is a star attraction in the sale at Christie's in London tomorrow.

TERENCE BLACKER

When I hunted, I was always surprised by the way huntsmen spent most of their waking hours thinking of ways to kill foxes.

— THE TUESDAY REVIEW, PAGE 4 →

Fixers with a hot line to Westminster

BY FRAN ABRAMS
Political Correspondent

THE CHARMES of Tuscany, the much-loved holiday destination of New Labour, must have been wearing a little thin for Peter Mandelson's former aide Derek Draper yesterday.

It was not clear last night whether the lobbyist had escaped to Italy to avoid the aftermath of revelations about his claims of links with the Government, or whether his trip to southern climes was rudely interrupted by the scandal.

What was becoming increasingly clear, though, was the extent to which Draper's industry has worked its way into the heart of the Blairite establishment over the past year. More than 40 former Labour staff members or senior party figures are now working for "public affairs consultancies" in and around Westminster.

A register of lobbyists' interests, which was published - co-incidentally - yesterday by the Association of Professional Political Consultants (APPC), shows that all the major firms now have at least one Labour insider working for them. The register shows all those who have worked for each of the companies in the six months up to May 1997.

The firm which employs Derek Draper, GPC Market Access, has a strong handful of Labour lobbyists to keep up contacts following his suspension yesterday. They include John Dickie, who was a director of Draper's Prima Europe company with the Downing Street policy adviser Roger Liddle; Dan Fox, a former junior in Tony Blair's office; two former Millbank staff and a Lewisham Labour councillor.

Other firms employ a similar range of "consultants" with address books bulging with Labour contacts.

The classic case, of course, is Lawson Lucas Mendelsohn, which has been criticised for boasting of its links with Government. Neal Lawson used to work for Gordon Brown, Ben Lucas for Jack Straw, and Jon Mendelsohn for Tony Blair. Among their other staff is Ian Jacobs, who has worked with Blair's pollster Philip Gould.

The Public Policy Unit, whose director Charles Miller is secretary of the APPC, has employed several Labour lob-



TONY BLAIR

ROGER LIDDLE
(European adviser)
Works in No 10 Policy Unit. Before election had his own lobbying company with Derek Draper.

JON MENDELSON
LLM
Founded LLM. Advised Tony Blair on business relations and campaign strategy before election.

DAN FOX
GPC
Junior helper in Blair's office during run-up to 1997 election.



GORDON BROWN

NEAL LAWSON
LLM
Former adviser to Gordon Brown. Worked for Blair on campaign strategy during election

KARL MILNER
GJW
Worked for Brown before the election, dealing with internal party relations



PETER MANDELSON

DEREK DRAPER
GPC Market Access
Former chief aide to Peter Mandelson. Switched to lobbying after election.

REX OSBORNE
Public Policy Unit
Worked for Mandelson for about 10 years on polling analysis.



BEN LUCAS
LLM
Former adviser to Jack Straw and ran Blair's political briefing unit during the election. Founded LLM after working for Lowe Bell Political.

RORY SCANLON
Beaumark
Worked in the rebuttal unit which sought to improve links with business and raise donations.

ROGER SHARP
GJW
Worked in business liaison unit which sought to improve links with business and raise donations.

DAVID LEAM
GPC Market Access
Another Millbank election veteran who went into heavy-hitting lobbying.



MIKE LEIGH
Westminster Strategy
Was adviser on education to Blunkett and senior figure in the lobbying industry for many years.

ALEX COLE
AS Bliss
Worked for Straw on home affairs issues in run-up to last year's election.

ADAM BOWEN
Recently Shandwick
Worked in election rebuttal unit, joined Shandwick but recently returned to Millbank.

JO MOORE
Westminster Strategy
Was head of Labour's press office before and after election.

MELISSA ROBINSON
GJW
Rebuttal unit and also worked on policy with Fabian Society. Bought her flat from Draper.

DAVID BLUNKETT
Millbank

JACK STRAW

REMY FRASER
Westminster
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PETER MANDELSON
Roger Liddle's book, *The Blair Revolution*. He charged business people to be given a resume of what Tony Blair stood for.

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ADAM BOWEN</b

Food technology: A new breed of eco-warrior is challenging the big corporations by taking direct action

Wheatfields turn into war zones

ONE OF the most intense commercial battles of recent years found a focus yesterday at the Royal Show in Berkshire, in a patch of wheat covering an area the size of two table-tennis tables. It looked no different from any other wheat, except that it had its own 24-hour security guard.

What the guards are protecting is actually invisible. The wheat has been genetically modified (GM) to contain extra gluten genes - so bread made from it should be lighter and bouncier. But that makes it a prime target for the groups aiming to uproot such crops. So far this year GM plants have been torn up at almost 30 of 200 experimental sites around Britain. To keep the wheat safe, a guard is necessary; at the cereals '98 show last month, a similar exhibit was torn up. This time the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), which has funded the wheat's development, is taking no chances.

But environmental activists are only the most immediate worry for Monsanto and the 15 or so other companies in the UK which are developing GM crops to make food. The issue is becoming a commercial battle royal. Millions of pounds are being spent developing new plants - and then millions more on persuading the public to like them.

It might seem that the biotechnology companies cannot lose. All they have to do is get government approval - a process which the public feels powerless to prevent - and then persuade farmers to plant the crops. Monsanto makes a GM soya resistant to its own Roundup herbicide. It was launched two years ago, and constitutes a few per cent of the total area of soya planted in the United States. This year 30 per cent of American soya will be Roundup Ready, and it is rising. Soon it will constitute the majority.

So why, two years after food made from that soya first appeared on British shelves, is Monsanto spending £1m on an advertising campaign telling people to trust GM food? Because in September, new rules on labelling come into force. These will mean that, for the first time in two years, you should be able to tell which of the foods such as bread, biscuits, cakes and pizza has been made using GM soya. Take a look on any contents label: about four

BY CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

in ten food products contain soya or soya oils or soya lecithin. From September, the food will have labels: "Does not contain genetically modified elements", or, "Contains genetically modified elements".

The Laboratory of the Government Chemist (LGC) is one of two UK organisations offering DNA tests to identify whether foods contain GM elements. Recently it hosted a crowded industry session with speakers from the supermarket Sainsbury's and Rank Hovis McDougall, which makes all sorts of baked items.

"We are expecting increasing demand for our services," said Helen Parkes, the LGC's innovations manager, whose clients are among the country's biggest food makers and retailers. "I feel that the supermarkets want to be responsible, and want a positive consumer perception of what they're doing."

Ms Parkes said the industry's concern is that: "If a product remains unlabelled then, by implication, it doesn't contain GM elements. They want to be sure that's true."

For Monsanto, labelling is a PR disaster. It had been delighted with the status quo. Up until now, the GM and standard soya were simply mixed after harvesting in the United States. There was no way to pick out if the biscuit you ate contained GM soya or not.

That is different from the first GM food launched in the UK, a tomato puree marketed by Zeneca - though that, too, relies on a Monsanto product. The "Flavr Savr" tomatoes, which take longer to rot, were always identified clearly. People liked it. They bought it.

They do not like Monsanto and the idea of unlabelled GM foods, though. A recent MORI poll found only 22 per cent of people support GM foods. If they are wandering around supermarkets, they will be turned off by those labels, unless Monsanto and the other biotechnology companies can persuade them that genetic engineering is good news.

It may seem a long way from guards protecting experimental wheat. But to the biotechnology companies, it is all the same battle. Only the battlefield differs.

The oilseed rape plants were

ROWAN TILLY and a group of fellow middle class eco-activists spent Saturday morning uprooting genetically-modified plants at a farm in Watlington, Oxfordshire.

The 40-year-old furniture-maker from Hove in East Sussex, who with other members of the pressure group genetiX snowball gave up their weekend to pull up almost 200 plants, said: "The Government is failing to tell people about the harmful effects of genetically-engineered crops. We are concerned that they could be endangering the environment and our health."

Ms Tilly added: "We want a five-year moratorium on the release of genetically-engineered crops into the environment pending further research and public consultation."

Other environmental activists, not linked to genetiX snowball, have attacked crop sites but most of the incidents have been carried out covertly by eco-warriors raiding plots under cover of dark.

genetiX snowball, a non-violent campaign, was formed a year ago, and has around 30 members around the country. They are worried about genes from genetically engineered plants getting into other plants, such as weeds, which could then become resistant to weedkiller and spread unchecked.

Ms Tilly said: "We are not using the methods of eco-warriors. We will simply carry on pulling up plants until the Government takes action to tackle the problem."

They fear that components of bacteria from genetically engineered plants could cause animals and humans to build up a resistance to antibiotics and to diseases.

BY DIANA BLAMIRE

owned by Monsanto, the US food giant, and had been genetically-modified to make them resistant to a herbicide used for killing off surrounding weeds.

Ms Tilly said: "All five of us were arrested. We were not charged but we were all prepared for court. We are prepared to take the consequences because we do not think we are doing anything wrong."

The 30 or so members of genetiX snowball members are very different from the new generation of eco-warriors, many of whom are

unemployed and nomadic, moving on from one demonstration to the next.

This group's members so far include a music teacher, solicitor and freelance journalist.

genetiX snowball, a non-violent campaign, was formed a year ago, and has around 30 members around the country. They are worried about genes from genetically engineered plants getting into other plants, such as weeds, which could then become resistant to weedkiller and spread unchecked.

Ms Tilly said: "We will definitely not be using the methods of eco-warriors. We will simply carry on pulling

up plants until the Government takes action to tackle the problem."

Other environmental activists,

not linked to genetiX snowball, have

attacked crop sites but most of the

incidents have been carried out

covertly by eco-warriors raiding

plots under cover of dark.

By contrast genetiX snowball

openly admits what it is doing and

announced its intentions to dig up

plants in Watlington in advance.

They fear that components of

bacteria from genetically engineered

plants could cause animals and hu

mans to build up a resistance to an

tiobiotics and to diseases."

Ms Tilly added: "We want a five-year moratorium on the release of genetically-engineered crops into the environment pending further research and public consultation."

English Nature, the Government's official wildlife adviser, has already called for the moratorium. However, genetiX snowball has taken to tearing up plants because the request has so far failed on deaf ears.

A spokesman for Friends of the Earth said: "There hasn't been an adequate democratic debate. There are reasonable concerns about weed-killer and pesticide-resistant crops - more research needs to be done."

And can we do it by Tuesday?

Cutter
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Harman demonstrates that the simple solutions are best

THAT MONDAY morning sinking feeling is delayed in the House of Commons until after lunch, when Social Security questions come round with monotonous regularity every four weeks.

Matters were not helped when the same department, still led for the time being by Secretary of State Ms Harriet Harman, immediately detained the House for another hour on the Green Paper proposals to reform the Child Support Agency.

In fairness the CSA statement, which I was reading, turned out to be easier to follow than anticipated. It was simple, logical and actually made a lot of sense. In essence,

subject to consultation, fathers will be given a simple percentage of their income deducted for each child for which they are responsible. Mothers will be allowed to keep up to £10 of other benefit even if they receive maintenance from the father.

Ms Harman makes much of pretending to be more stupid than she really is and admitted this, in a recent interview with *The Daily Telegraph*.

Just occasionally, and yesterday was such a day, a supposedly stupid person has an ability to cut through complexities and come up with more common sense answers than people like David Willets, the Tory education spokesman, who

suffers from the reputation of having two brains. If we accept for one brief moment that Ms Harman is, to use her own words, "an air head", she made more effective use, as anyone else with half a brain would do, of gut-instinct and common sense to present eminently sensible proposals.

The Child Support Agency was invented early in the 1990s by Peter Lilley, the then Secretary of State for Social Security, with a mass of detail, unnecessary complication and endless bureaucracy. The House of Commons passed this half-baked legislation partly because the then Labour opposition agreed to the Bill with very little

mass of aggrieved constituents complaining either, if they were a mother, that the CSA had done nothing to chase the father; or, if they were the father, that he could not afford to pay. I recall divorced constituents coming to surgeries to berate us about each other. But both parents were usually agreed on the hopelessness of the CSA. I do not recall any feckless father actually being caught, successfully, by the system and I can count on the fingers of one hand those women and children who are actually better off, as a result of the CSA in my constituency.

Ms Harman's announcement will go a long way to rectifying the

failure of Parliament to get it right in 1991. Her statement was broadly welcomed by Members on all sides. The Tory spokesman, Ian Duncan Smith, was measured in his response and accepted most of her ideas.

Ms Harman's statement could not have come at a better time for her future career. There are gossipshop rumours about her long-term political health and her syrupy statement of broad good sense will do her no harm as re-shuffle day looms. Her performance reminded me of a latter-day Mary Poppins and I could almost imagine her mellifluous tones singing the words of her script to the tune of "A spoon

full of sugar helps the medicine go down, in the most delightful way".

She is infuriatingly charming, good-looking and elegant in her designer clothes. Yesterday she was only out-shone in the fashion stakes by her junior minister, Joen Ruddock.

Not much else caused a stir in the hour before Ms Harman's statement but there were raised eyebrows from the hooligan tendency, led by Nicholas Soames (C, Mid Sussex), when Lorna Fitzsimons (Lab, Rochdale) said, to laughter: "We see an explosion of women in part-time work". Let us hope, for Ms Harman's sake, that this does not turn out to be the case.

THE SKETCH



MICHAEL BROWN

Blair to appoint Labour chair

CAMPAIGNING

BY COLIN BROWN

Chief Political Correspondent

Mr Blair considered Mo Mowlam, the Northern Ireland Secretary, ideal for the role but she is too enmeshed in the continuing confrontations between Nationalists and Loyalists.

Stephen Byers, the Education minister, is an option, but is not expected to be moved into the Cabinet this time.

One possibility could be John Prescott, who has told the Prime Minister that the party needs urgent attention.

The Deputy Prime Minister has a reputation as a campaigner for mass membership, and would be a powerful voice for the concerns being expressed by the party's grassroots.

Mr Prescott could be too busy with his existing titles, but he made an offer to Mr Blair a month ago to tackle the growing unrest in the party at Westminster.

Labour's party organisation has been run by the general secretary, traditionally from a trade union background, on the party's ruling national executive committee. Tom Sawyer, a Union leader, is due to step down in October as general secretary. He is expected to hand over to Margaret McDonagh, when the role will become more like a chief executive in charge of running the party organisation.

The Prime Minister could announce the new role as early as the forthcoming reshuffle, which is due before the end of this month, but the announcement could be delayed until the annual party conference.

Sea theme for Scots

AN IMAGE of a rowing boat belly-up on the loch shore as the new Scottish parliament has beaten more predictable debating chambers envisaged by four rival architects, writes Nonie Niesewand.

Enric Miralles, based in Barcelona, and who frequent-



Peter Bottomley, MP, at a charity swimming contest between the House of Lords and the House of Commons

Peter Macdiarmid

Hodge seeks extra £600m to help poorer students

COLLEGES

By DAISY SAMPSON

"Child benefit is only paid to those whose children stay in full-time education and they tend to be children from better-off families," she said, opening a debate on further education.

Agreeing with Ms Hodge that the sector has been the Cinderella of education, he said: "FE has at times been the least regarded sector and the severe danger is that FE will once again fall into the hole."

Warning that the system of student support in FE was "close to total collapse", she said it was "outrageous" that only half of the country's young people continued in full-time education up to the age of 18.

Agreeing with Ms Hodge that the sector has been the Cinderella of education, he said: "FE has at times been the least regarded sector and the severe danger is that FE will once again fall into the hole."

Charlotte Atkins (Lab, Staffordshire Moorlands) urged the minister to provide the extra funding, and warned of an education "catastrophe".

Ms Atkins, a former press officer at Unison, likened the under funding of the sector to "progressive arsenic poisoning" - if you waited for the

issue of funding will continue to be the ghost at this evening's intellectual feast because if you seek to simply reassure both sides of the House with warm words, then one would be entitled to a little suspicion."

Agreeing with Ms Hodge that the sector has been the Cinderella of education, he said: "FE has at times been the least regarded sector and the severe danger is that FE will once again fall into the hole."

Charlotte Atkins (Lab, Staffordshire Moorlands) urged the minister to provide the extra funding, and warned of an education "catastrophe".

Ms Atkins, a former press officer at Unison, likened the under funding of the sector to "progressive arsenic poisoning" - if you waited for the

symptoms to show it would be too late.

Despite government protestations, the Opposition insisted during Social Security Questions, that a change in the official school-leaving date could cost single mothers more than £800 in child benefit. It had been suggested that the leaving date for 16-year-olds should be changed from the first Monday in September to 26 June.

Simon Burns, Conservative spokesman on social security, said: "Lord Richard, urged the minister to provide the extra funding, and warned of an education "catastrophe".

Ms Atkins, a former press officer at Unison, likened the under funding of the sector to "progressive arsenic poisoning" - if you waited for the

leaving date for 16-year-olds should be changed from the first Monday in September to 26 June.

"Will you confirm that

means that some mothers will lose up to £356 and that all parents will lose, on average, £114?

"Could you please tell the House why, given that state schools finish for the summer, usually in mid to late July, 26 June has been chosen?"

Ms Ruddock retorted: "I really do not know where you get your information from. I can tell you that in respect of the benefit inquiry you made, the answer is definitely: 'No'."

To opposition jeers, the Secretary of State for Social Security, Harriet Harman, side-stepped a question from James Gray (C, Wiltshire) calling for assurances that she would not abolish child benefit.

Ms Harman said simply: "We have said that child benefit for those over 16 will be subject to review."

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Backing grows for rural ministry

THE Prime Minister confirmed, in answer to a question from James Gray (C, Wiltshire North) that consideration is being given as to whether he should set up a ministry of rural affairs as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. The review is expected to report next week.

Neill's daily rate

LORD NEILL QC is paid a daily rate of £500 for his duties as standards watchdog. Public Service Minister David Clark said in a Commons written reply last night Lord Neill had spent 44 full working days carrying out his duties up to April, for which he was paid a total of £22,000. It was revealed in answer to Peter Bradley (Lab, The Wrekin). Lord Neill was appointed chairman of the Committee on Standards in Public Life on 10 November, taking over from its first chairman, Lord Nolan.

Tory lords spark 'constitutional crisis' over Commons ruling

REBELLION

By DAISY SAMPSON

abuse", will urge peers to accept the decision of the Committee to reject an amendment to the Government's Teaching and Higher Education Bill to equalise the payments of tuition fees in Scotland for students north and south of the Border.

The Lords are prepared to back a further amendment to the Bill with the Liberal De-

mocrats in spite of the Government's appeals to let the Bill through to the Statute Book.

Lord Cranborne said: "Lord Richard knows as well as I do that in the end the elected chamber will win. Quite right too."

"But, we would like to show as clearly as we can that the Government is treating people in Wales and Northern Ireland extremely inequitably, particularly compared to Scottish students."

MP 'target of race hate mail'

HELEN BRINTON, Labour MP for Peterborough, has been sent hate mail because of her stand against racism. She believes the right-wing British National Party is behind the campaign, which was sparked after she replied to a letter from a constituent containing "outrageous comments about black and Asian people". The BNP denies her allegations.

THE HOUSE

Commons: Questions on the environment, regions and transport: Tory debate on release of information to select committees; adjournment debate on Harlow Playhouse.

Lords: Teaching and Higher Education Bill; Commons amendments; School Standards and Framework Bill; report: Welfare of Livestock (Amendment) Regulations; Air Carrier Liability Order; Deregulation (Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles) Order.

Today

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THE INDEPENDENT
Tuesday 7 July 1998

HOME NEWS/9

Judge backs tobacco firms' challenge

FOUR TOBACCO companies yesterday won the right to bring a High Court challenge against a report calling for a ban on tobacco advertising and smoking in public places.

Granting leave for a judicial review, Mr Justice Moses said that the report, by the Scientific Committee on Tobacco and Health (SCOTH), might do "commercial damage" to the tobacco companies. He added that it was "arguable" that they should have been consulted and given the chance to comment before the report was published.

British American Tobacco

BY KATE WATSON-SMYTH

(BAT), Gallaher, Imperial and Rothmans were given leave to seek a judicial review and an order quashing the report, which was published in March. They also want an injunction restraining the Government from taking the report into account when considering new smoking and health legislation.

Chris Procter, the head of science and regulation for BAT, welcomed the judge's decision and described statements in the report accusing the tobacco industry of targeting children and non-smokers as "abso-

lutely outrageous". "Children should not smoke and we want to work with the Government to ensure kids are not smoking," he said.

Mr Procter said the report had been selective in its use of scientific studies and had chosen to ignore important evidence. "The report ignored two studies about the effects of passive smoking and heart disease because they were funded by the tobacco industry.

"We would like a proper look at the science behind the call for a ban on smoking in public places and we hope that some of the outrageous statements in

this report will be amended or removed. The judge has agreed with the UK tobacco companies that there is a case for SCOTH to answer. That is a very significant development."

In his ruling, Mr Justice Moses said that the SCOTH report appeared to be an attack on the "commercial morality" of the tobacco companies.

The committee, made up of independent scientific experts and the Government's main adviser on tobacco issues, had chosen to record remarks that, on face value, had the power to cause instant and irreparable damage, he said, adding that

they had been made without any comment on the independence or reliability of their source.

The committee had a choice - either to seek comment or to omit the critical material. Had it omitted that material the report would not have suffered in any way, he said. "After all, it was intended to be a scientifically rigorous report. Arguably there was not much scientific rigour about the passages I have quoted."

A spokeswoman for SCOTH said permission for the judicial review was granted on the narrow point that the committee could have been expected to consult the tobacco companies before including the opinions of a marketing expert on the industry's marketing and promotion strategy.

"It should be noted that the decision to grant leave does not impugn the accuracy of the harm and the size of the risk, but there's no doubt that it merely reflects the fact that, on one particular aspect, its procedure may have been open to criticism."

Bill O'Neill, a science and research adviser to the British Medical Association, accused the tobacco industry of "posturing", and said it has had ample opportunity to publish

any scientific information that it felt had not been submitted to SCOTH. "We are confident of the scientific evidence that breathing other people's smoke causes disease. There are arguments about the strength of the harm and the size of the risk, but there's no doubt that the risk is there."

Clive Bates, the director of Action on Smoking and Health (ASH), said: "Leave for a judicial review has been granted solely on the grounds of a statement in the report that the tobacco industry needs to recruit 300 new smokers a day to replace those who die from

smoking-related diseases. It is typical that the tobacco industry should continue to deny the obvious."

"There is hardly any chance that they will succeed and ASH has expressed incredulity at the industry's self-importance and its unwillingness to accept what the risk is there."

The four companies produce more than 90 per cent of all UK brands. They argued that they were not trying to lure young smokers but seeking to build up brand loyalty among existing customers.

Royal park's café set to go underground

AN "ECO-CHIC" café, half underground and with a roof made of grass, is to be built in the heart of St James's Park, London. The £1.6m wooden building will replace the existing Cake House, a concrete-and-glass café built in the 1970s.

The Grade One listed site has been contoured so that the new building will not be visible from the Mall. Designed to follow the ground plan of John Nash, who laid out the park in 1827 on curvilinear paths, two interlocking shells made of larch will occupy these paths at a junction so that it can only be seen obliquely on approach.

By contouring the building into a lower level, the architects, Michael Hopkins and Partners, who won a competition held by the Royal Parks to rebuild the Cake House, have been able to create the swoop of the roof as a hill. Low-growing plants over the roof return 500 square metres to parkland, but walking upon it will be discouraged.

Mark Fisher, the Minister for Arts and Architecture, said: "The challenge was to ensure first-class facilities for visitors to the park without detracting from this masterpiece of English landscape design."

From the lakeside, a sheltered colonnade can seat 100 on balustrades that double as benches. Larch is used both for the structure and panels, which

will weather to a silvery grey. Iroko hardwood from sustainable sources has been used for the decking.

Behind the colonnade, a glazed entrance leads into the 120-seater restaurant. Royal Parks resisted the inclination to turn this prime lakeside site, with its view of ducks and willows, into an expensive eatery.

Although Seventies buildings have come back into fashion with the blue-plaque brigade, few will mourn the existing Cake House when it is demolished. Andy Barnett, a project director from Hopkins and Partners, describes the Cake House as "a spirited little Seventies piece that had passed its sell-by date".

No sooner had the obtrusive concrete and glass pavilion designed by Eric Bedford of the Ministry of Works opened in 1970 than it leaked. Worse, it was too small, and a clumsy extension all around the circumference was hastily erected.

The Queen, who lives nearby, was not consulted on the plans to replace the Cake House through a Royal Parks spokesman pointed out that the winning firm designed the ticket stall outside Buckingham Palace, which was well received.



As the design was unveiled, a cow brought in to give a 19th-century feel for yesterday's announcement kicked Lee Cullen, a secretary, to the ground

Tom Pilston

Scientists show Friar Tuck lived up to his image

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor



Friar Tuck, brought to life by Eugene Pallette

THE IMAGE of medieval monks as gluttonous Friar Tucks has been backed by archaeologists investigating two monastic burial sites in London.

Some of the skeletons found in these cemeteries are affected by a condition found in severely obese men where the bones of the spine fuse together to resemble dripping wax.

The condition, known as diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis, shows that the monks did not always sup as frugally as they were supposed to under the rules of their Cistercian order.

Archaeologists working for the Museum of London uncovered the skeletons at the site of St Mary Stratford Langthorne in East London, which is being excavated as part of the Jubilee Line construction, and Merton Priory in south London. A report in the journal *British Archaeology* said there is other evidence to suggest the monks lived well: "Skeletons

from Stratford showed little evidence of dietary deficiency," it says.

Al Green, archaeology project manager at the Museum of London, said the research is still in its early stages because of the huge number of skeletons - more than 500 - uncovered at the Stratford site. The cemeteries were used

for burying both monks and lay people but the high proportion of adult males suggest they were primarily used by the inhabitants of the monasteries.

St Mary Stratford Langthorne was founded in 1135 and survived for the next four centuries by living off the relatively fertile land on the north bank of the Thames, Mr Green said. Although it would technically have been subsistence farming, the skeletons suggest there was no shortage of food.

Previous research by Barbara Harvey, history don at Somerville College in Oxford, suggested that Benedictine monks of the 16th century ate colossal meals resulting in the consumption of more than 7,000 calories a day.

Records of what went through a typical monastic kitchen showed that the monks ate six shoulders of mutton at one meal. Calculations based on the number of monks eating together and the size of a typical medieval sheep suggested that each man ate three pounds of meat at a single sitting.

Call for five-term school year

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

Teachers' leaders condemned the plan, but Education Action Zones in the London Boroughs of Newham and Croydon, set up by the Government to be test beds for the school system of the next century, are already investigating by a four or five-term year.

Leaders of local authorities, who employ teachers, supported proposals which may spell the end of the present three-term year and its replacement by a four or five-term year.

Schools would have, for instance, five instead of six or seven weeks holiday in the summer: two weeks in October, two at Christmas, two in March and two in May.

Charles Nolda, director of employment affairs at the Local Government Management Board, said: "We are ending the twentieth century with a school

year based on a agrarian society. A more logical arrangement for the school year is not radical, it is common sense. No well-managed organisation outside education would still be operating on working time that was 300 years out of date."

Graham Lane, chair of the National Employers' Organisation for School Teachers, said city technology colleges which ran five-term years had found that they were very successful in reducing teacher stress.

The employers' blueprint, which was sent to ministers last

night, includes a proposal to cut teachers' holidays from 13 to eight weeks in return for a substantial pay rise.

Pupils would be in school for no longer than at present but teachers would use the extra time for training, lesson preparation, administration, staff meetings and parents' evenings.

If the Government turns down the request for an inquiry which would report by next April, local authorities say that they will hold their own.

Mr Lane warned ministers that there must be changes to

teachers' pay and conditions to avoid a recruitment crisis. "There is plenty of evidence that teachers' pay and conditions of service are not attractive to young graduates," he said.

Peter Smith, general secretary of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, said: "Countries which outperform the UK in education do not achieve success by working teachers to death. Local authorities should point to a single international competitor with the sort of school year they are suggesting."

The Queen, who lives nearby, was not consulted on the plans to replace the Cake House through a Royal Parks spokesman pointed out that the winning firm designed the ticket stall outside Buckingham Palace, which was well received.

Head suspended over student violence

BY BEN RUSSELL
Education Correspondent

Pending the outcome of an investigation into the running of the school.

The move followed a two-day inspection by a team appointed by the local authority. Council leaders concluded they were "unable to guarantee the welfare of pupils and staff".

The school caters for 70 children aged between five and 16 with emotional and behavioural difficulties. All will attend classes elsewhere or will have home tuition while the school is closed.

Paul Clein, chairman of Liverpool City Council's education committee, said he hoped the school would re-open next week with a senior inspector in

place as head teacher. "We have closed the school for a week as a temporary measure. This is standard procedure in such cases, as is the suspension of the head teacher," he said.

"We will now have a series of meetings between teachers and LEA officers to determine where we go from here. In such cases it is normal to appoint a senior inspector as

head teacher. Thankfully this is not a situation which arises all that often. The most important thing is that we get this situation sorted out," he added.

"It is our duty to protect the welfare of pupils and staff and obviously we also have a duty to supply education and we are conscious that there is a continuance of education for the pupils of this school."

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British Medical Association conference

BMA chief attacks 'cruel Britannia'

BY JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

FIFTY YEARS after the National Health Service was founded to close the health gap between rich and poor, millions of Britons still find themselves living in a country described as "cruel Britannia" than Cool Britannia. Sir Alexander Macara, chairman of the British Medical Association, said yesterday.

Despite government promises to tackle health inequalities and the appointment of the country's first minister of public health there was still no real evidence of the Government's commitment to the task, he said.

'Populist' cancer pledge criticised

A GOVERNMENT pledge to speed treatment and cut waiting lists for cancer patients could lead to delays for patients with other more serious illnesses doctors said yesterday.

In a White Paper on the NHS published last November the Government said every patient with suspected cancer would be seen by a specialist within two weeks of their GP requesting an appointment. The two-week limit is due to come into effect next April for breast cancer patients and in April 2000 for all other cancer patients.

Speakers at the conference said it was the wrong pledge, made on the wrong principle, and sent the wrong message to the public about the danger of cancer which was not equal for all types of the disease. Dr Fiona Randall said the two-week limit for referrals was impractical because it was difficult to define which patients had suspected cancer and un-

necessary because doctors already prioritised patients.

Dr Anthony Atkinson said the Government was playing on the public's fear of cancer for populist reasons when other patients awaiting treatment for heart or digestive problems were in equal need.

At a press conference later, Dr John Chisolm, chairman of the BMA GPs' committee, said: "When you try to speed up treatment you need to speed it up on the basis of clinical need. Cancer is often an urgent matter but so are many other things."

He added: "We don't want to see other patients moved down the queue for the sake of a political gesture."

A Department of Health spokeswoman said: "The sooner cancer is diagnosed the better the patient's treatment and life expectancy. The Government stands by its decision to make cancer a bigger priority."

Giving his valedictory address to the BMA's annual conference in Cardiff, Sir Alexander, who steps down after six years as chairman of the association on Thursday, praised the Labour government for responding to doctors' concerns and being "good listeners". But he accused ministers of refusing to face the facts about pressures on the NHS.

"We need new hospitals, we desperately need consultant expansion ... without consul-

tant expansion all the worthy aspirations about reducing waiting lists are but empty rhetoric."

The response to his remarks from the 600 delegates was notably subdued. The BMA's conference has fallen a week before the Government is expected to announce a major cash boost for the NHS, which appears to have recruited many doctors' appetite for protest about under-funding.

Speaking to reporters later, Sir Alexander said the NHS needed an extra £200m immediately to bring United Kingdom spending up to the level of comparable European countries, followed by further increases for the next five years.

"Right now we need that much more to deal with crumbling buildings, crumbling equipment and crumbling people."

In his speech Sir Alexander attacked the Government's neglect of public health and medical research. "A generation of the most highly trained public health specialists in the world remains mal-employed and under-utilised," he said.

He criticised the Government's U-turn on the private finance initiative, which it had opposed in Opposition, saying it brought "short-term gain for long-term pain". Five major hospital schemes have so far been approved under the initiative which requires NHS trusts to raise funds from the private sector for new hospitals but means that they pay higher commercial rates of interest.

Sir Alexander said "the ringing sincerity" of the Prime Minister's commitment to the NHS in his speech to last week's 50th anniversary conference gave cause for hope. But he said the need for hard choices would continue and reiterated his demand for a national debate on healthcare rationing.



Planespotters on the roof of Terminal 2 at Heathrow and, below, getting a closer look

Brian Harris

At busy times the planespotters come in one after the other ...

BY RANDEEP RAMESH
Transport Correspondent

TRAINSPOTTING MAY be a pastime that is nearing the end of the line, but planespotting has taken off.

These aircraft enthusiasts have gathered on the tatty rooftop of Heathrow's Terminal 2, intent on spotting and jotting down the identities of all the jets in the skies.

"Most airlines have got elusive aircraft. I have spent years getting certain planes - but I always get them in the end," explains John Adcock, who has retired after 40 years in the health service and now spends three days a week spotting.

The obsession does not come cheap. Apart from a vacuum flask and notebook, planespotters require a camera with a long lens, radio scanner and video camera if they are properly to capture the very rarest of steel birds. Then there is the travelling. "You can spend thousands," says Mr Burgess. "I have travelled to Japan, Singapore, America, Canada, Spain, France, Germany, Belgium and Greece to spot planes."

The global nature of the hobby is part of its attraction.



Last week, groups of planespotters travelled from Hong Kong to see the last planes land at Kai Tak airport.

Despite the cost, planespotting has survived and thrived where its older cousins - train, bus- and car-spotting - appear to be in terminal decline. According to the

than 30 enthusiasts could be found at Heathrow, whereas only one "gricer" could be found at any London rail terminus.

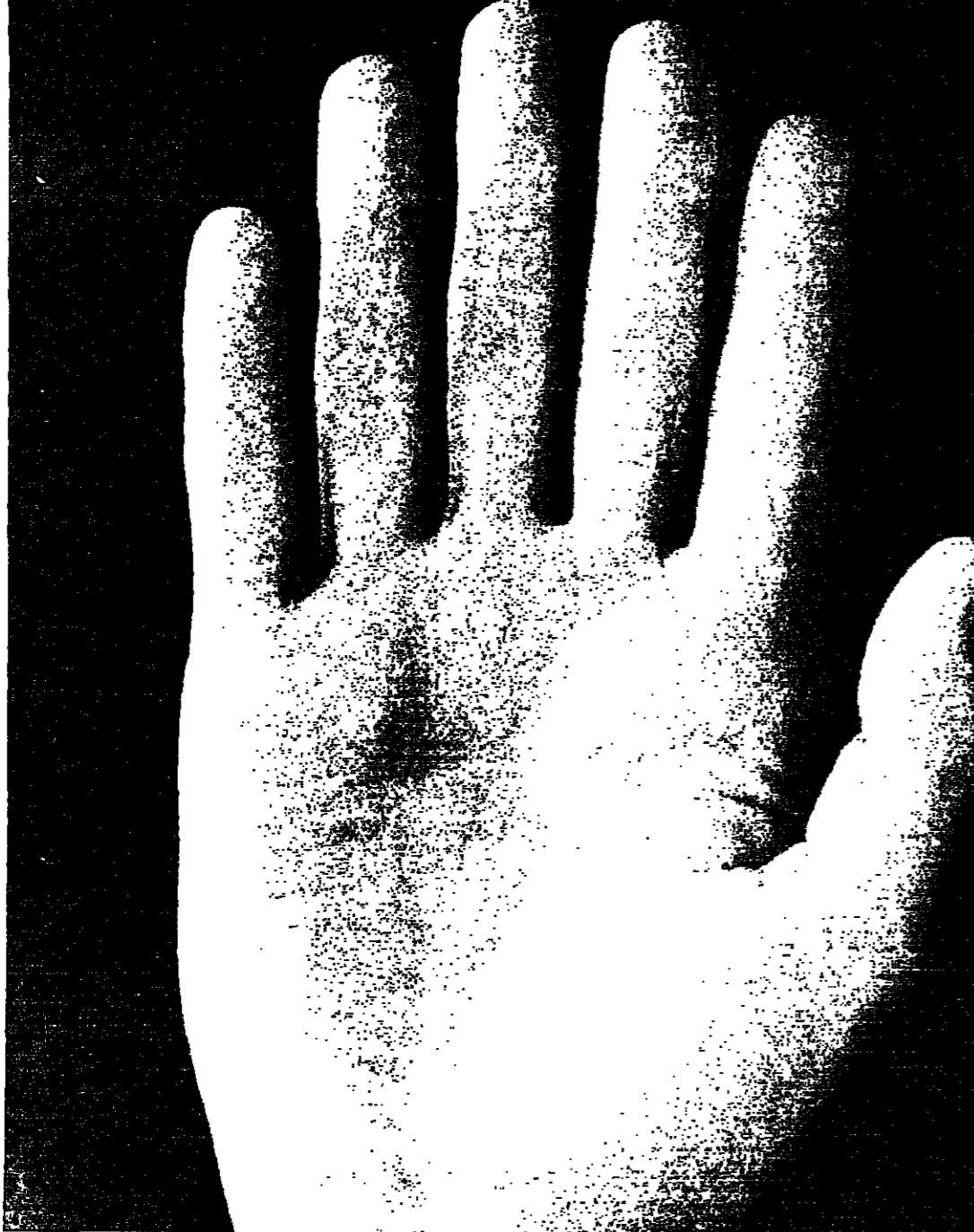
"Part of the problem is that there just is not much new stock on the network," says Phil Sutton, co-editor of Rail Express. However Mr Sutton says that privatisation may revive interest in the hobby. "It is not dead, it just seems to be dying out. But we are seeing more liversies and that could spark more interest."

Part of the problem is that any form of spotting invites the scorn of those on the outside. For most people, the pastimes are synonymous with graph-paper shirts and tatty anoraks. Many view them as a relic of a by-gone age.

Experts say that is a crude caricature. "These people are basically normal," said Dr David Weeks, a clinical neuro-psychiatrist at Edinburgh who conducted a decade-long study into "English eccentrics".

"The worse that can be said is that they are boring. A lot of trainspotters that I met during my research were divorced. The usual reason their wives left them was because they spent too much time spotting."

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Motorists face ban from City of London

BY RANDEEP RAMESH

MOTORISTS COULD be banned from the City of London, leaving streets clear for "high-value" business traffic, under controversial plans put forward by City councillors.

Another separate proposal would see drivers charged £3 to enter the Square Mile, in order to curb traffic levels in the capital. But chauffeur-driven cars and limousine services, along with the emergency services, would be allowed "unfettered" access.

Councillors say that without such measures, London's status as a leading financial centre is under threat. A report by the corporation's engineers claims:

"Excessive volumes of through traffic on local roads seriously affects the daily routine required between City organisations. Typically these high-value-of-time City movements may comprise such elements as clients visiting financial institutions, board meetings etc."

It warned "unless through traffic is actively prevented ... the vitality and efficiency of the City, as a place to do business, is at risk".

Motorists organisations described the plans as elitist and unfair. "You would be creating first- and second-class road citizens," said Edmund King, a spokesman for the RAC.

£2.3m payout for cerebral palsy boy, 12

A 12-YEAR-OLD boy who was severely disabled during his birth at a military hospital was awarded £2.35 million damages against the Ministry of Defence.

The award to Christopher Firmin, who has cerebral palsy and needs 24-hour care, is one of the largest of its kind.

Christopher was disabled after being starved of oxygen for six hours while he was born at the British Military Hospital in Hanover, in what was then West Germany, in 1986.

The Ministry of Defence had admitted liability and Christopher was awarded the sum at a London High Court hearing.

Dr Michael Powers QC, for Christopher, told the court: "This proposed settlement for a cerebral palsy case is, if not the highest, certainly one of the highest."

Christopher's mother Jill Smith said: "We could not be happier. It is very early days to even begin to imagine the difference it will make."

BY SIMEON TEGEL



Christopher Firmin, who needs constant care

the settlement for Christopher, telling the court: "I can only hope that he will have, despite his disability, a happy life."

Later Christopher's mother Jill Smith said: "We could not be happier. It is very early days to even begin to imagine the difference it will make."

Mrs Smith, 37, who gave up her job as a nurse at the Farnborough Army base, near Hanover, to care for her son, said the first thing they would do would be to buy a specially adapted house for Christopher in Bournemouth.

Aborigine fury erupts over land bill

OPPONENTS OF Australia's planned Aboriginal land rights law launched a last-ditch battle yesterday to scuttle the bill which the former Labor prime minister Paul Keating condemned as a betrayal of black Australia.

As Aboriginal groups held a "national day of shame", parliament was told that it would be pandering to racists by passing the bill under a deal struck last week by the Liberal-National Prime Minister John Howard and the independent senator Brian Harradine. In a front-page article in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Mr Keating accused John Howard, the conservative prime minister who replaced him two years ago, of being a "redneck" who had betrayed Aborigines.

On the front lawn of Parliament House, Canberra, protesters planted a "sea of bands", a mass of coloured cardboard symbols that spelt out the word "shame", as the bill which limits Aboriginal rights over traditional lands was debated in the upper house, the Senate.

The Labor opposition and government agree that some new legislation is needed to regulate native title - uncertain land rights granted by the courts in recent years. But the opposition says the government is going too far in protecting farmers from Aboriginal claims.

The opposition justice spokesman Nick Bolhus said that future Australian generations would ultimately be ashamed of parliament's role in limiting Aboriginal rights. "Today is the day of appeasement of racists and racism," he said.

In his article, Mr Keating employed the colourful and scathing language for which he is famous. His main targets were Mr Harradine and Frank Brennan, a Catholic priest who has been a staunch supporter of Aboriginal rights but who appeared last week to side with Mr Harradine's latest tactics.

"Talk about meddling priests!" Mr Keating said. "When Aborigines see Brennan, Harradine and other professional Catholics coming they should tell them to clear out. For only Aborigines know what their permanent interests are and how few are the others in politics who will truly fight for

BY ROBERT MILLIKEN
in Sydney

them." If Australia had gone to a general election over native title, it is clear that racial division would have surfaced but Mr Keating did not appear to be troubled by this.

Mr Harradine and Mr Brennan, he said, may have imagined they had saved the country from a race-based election.

"In reality, they have saved Howard from paying the price of his folly, and made the Aborigines pay it instead. The country, meanwhile, is apparently supposed to give thanks for being saved once more from honestly facing our oldest moral problem."

Howard's price would have been a transitory one - his demise, if it happened, but a blip on the screen of our history. The price for the Aborigines is permanent. Extinguishment is final. There will be no revival of certain rights."

Mr Keating was referring here to the Howard bill's refusal to allow Aborigines to negotiate with companies who want to mine on pastoral leases. Farmers on the same leases have such rights.

Ever since the Australian High Court ruled in 1996 that Aboriginal native title could co-exist with farming activities on pastoral leases, farmers have waged a strong campaign for the government to extinguish native title rights altogether.

In Queensland and Western Australia, physically the biggest states, most farming land is comprised of pastoral leases, where farmers hold long leases rather than freehold title.

"And what was the problem with co-existence of title on pastoral leases?" Mr Keating asked.

"Immense properties with one cow to every few hundred square kilometres and Aborigines exercising a right to traverse and live there?"

"Where is one right inconsistent with another? Will the sight of an Aborigine on the horizon somehow make the cow's life unbearable?"

"Whatever was the problem? The Aborigines said clearly that, where pastoralists' rights were inconsistent in any way with their rights over the same land, they would accept the pastoral right as the dominant one."



Protesters mark the 'day of shame' on the lawns of Parliament House, Canberra, before a crucial vote on Aboriginal land rights

Michael Bowers/Reuters

Serb faces first UN genocide trial

A BOSNIAN SERB pleaded not guilty yesterday to the first trial for genocide to open at the UN War Crimes Tribunal at the Hague. Milan Kovacevic, 57, said: "No, not guilty, your honour" as each count was read out.

He has been charged with genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in running three notorious detention centres in the Prijedor district of north-west Bosnia.

Thousands of Muslim and Croat civilians were held at the camps at Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje after war broke out in Bosnia in 1992, and many were killed, raped and tortured. If convicted, he faces a life sentence.

British SAS troops working for the Nato-led peace forces in

BY MARCUS TANNER
Bosnia snatched Kovacevic and one other suspect last year in Prijedor. The other suspect, Sime Drijaca, pulled a gun and was shot dead.

Television pictures of conditions in the Prijedor camps shown in July 1992 shocked the world. A memorable shot showed an emaciated, skeletal man fingering the wire fence of the camp behind which the TV crew was filming.

"The evidence will show that the accused acted with the intention to... commit genocide," Brenda Hollis, for the prosecution, said. She said camp guards at Omarska and Keraterm "were free to kill, torture and rape" with no intervention from their superiors. "In Omarska, people saw corpses



Milan Kovacevic, accused of prison camp atrocities

every day... killings were routine in Keraterm." There were so many dead bodies at Omarska that large trucks were needed at times to remove them from the camp, she said.

Kovacevic's lawyer, Dusan Vucicevic, insisted the defendant did not harbour ill feelings toward other ethnic groups. Kovacevic's function was deputy president of the Prijedor Krizni Stab (Crisis Committee), a body loyal to the Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and his ultra-nationalist Serb Democratic Party. It was set up in spring 1992 as the former Yugoslav republic slid towards ethnic warfare.

Serbs were a majority in the countryside round Prijedor, while the Muslims dominated the towns. That made it easy for Kovacevic's group to organise the seizure of the terrain, hem in the Muslims and deal with them at their leisure.

Thousands of Muslims and Croats who failed to escape to Croatia as the Serbs attacked

were transported to the camps, established in empty factories. Some, usually the most prominent citizens, were simply executed. The unluckiest were tortured, or forced to perform inhuman acts on other prisoners, such as mutilation. Most of the women prisoners were kept at Trnopolje, where rape and torture were commonplace, tribunal prosecutors say.

That Western TV crews ever got to film what Kovacevic and his men are alleged to have presided over was the result of a bungle by his boss, Radovan Karadzic. Seemingly unaware of what was going on in Prijedor, and stung by accusations that the Bosnian Serbs were committing atrocities, he handed out permits to journalists ordering the commanders of the controversial "detention" cen-

tres to let Western observers in. The Prijedor Krizni Stab was livid but had to comply with the command.

Kovacevic is the first to stand trial on genocide charges. The tribunal has also indicted Mr Karadzic and his wartime military commander, Ratko Mladic.

The trial comes after the tribunal had the embarrassment of a leading war crime suspect committing suicide in prison. Slavko Dokmanovic, Serb mayor of Vukovar in the early 1990s, cheated a possible guilty verdict over the murder of about 280 Croat hospital patients in Vukovar in November 1991. Kovacevic is one of 27 detainees at the court's detention centre who are facing war crimes charges or awaiting the outcome of appeal.

Kremlin offers Cold War weapons for satellite use

A MILESTONE in nuclear disarmament will be reached today when a Russian submarine launches a Western scientific satellite using one of the most deadly weapons in the Cold War arsenal.

Instead of landing on London or Washington, the Russian SS-23 missile will lift the first civilian satellite into orbit from an underwater launch pad. A Soviet-built submarine, the *Novorossiysk*, will launch the German-made satellite from a position in the Barents Sea just a few miles from the Russian naval port of Murmansk.

The Russians are keen to offer their stockpile of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) for launching commercial satellites. The only alternative under the terms of the 1993 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty would be to destroy them.

The advantage of a submarine launch is that it can take place in any weather from almost anywhere in the world, according to Russian officials in charge of the project. "Any time at all in any conditions," said Vyacheslav Danilkin, deputy general designer at the Makeyev State Rocket Centre, in the Ural's city of Miass where the rocket was built.

Today's launch, scheduled for 4pm, is the first important

BY STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

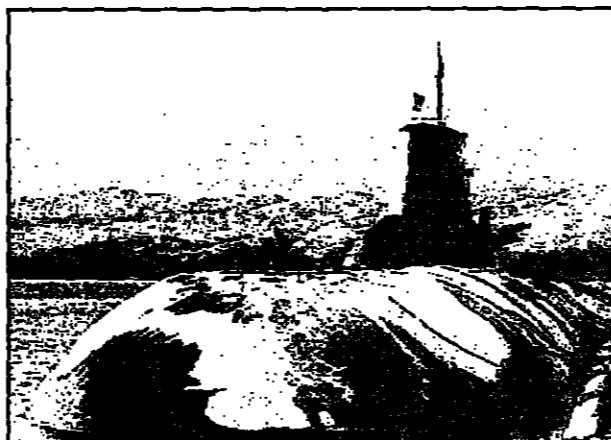
test of the Russian navy's ability to control a civilian satellite project. If successful, it stands to gain dozens of orders from Western companies operating in space.

The German-built satellite, called Tubsat, is designed to track moving objects on the ground and can monitor the movements of anything from rare animals to stolen cars, according to Professor Udo Renner of the Technical University of Berlin, who helped to develop the satellite.

"We are a little nervous. We usually always tell the press in advance about a launch but this time we thought we would keep it quiet but it has leaked out," the professor said. "This is the first test of a submarine launch and so far everything is going fine. The Russians have been very professional."

The SS-23 ballistic missile has a range of 6,300 miles, but its extra rocket stage can lift the 10kg (22lb) satellite from several feet underwater to an altitude of about 770km (480 miles).

Dr Andrew Coates, a satellite expert at the Mullard Space Science Laboratory at University College London, said the launch will mark an important



A Russian Typhoon class nuclear submarine Credit

point in the disarmament process. "It points to an increasing use of military rockets for peaceful purposes. The problems of launching from underwater are presumably as difficult as putting a warhead on Washington."

Land-launched Russian ICBMs have already been used to launch civilian satellites but a submarine launch offers some important advantages.

"By launching a satellite from the Barents Sea the Russians can put civilian satellites into a much more northerly inclination, which means they can cover a greater area of the world," Dr Coates said.

Alexander Smirnov, a

spokesman for the Russian navy, said that using submarine missiles to launch satellites is the best way of getting rid of them. "Why scrap them into useless pieces of metal when there is such a brilliant chance to make best use of them?"

The Russian navy has seven Delta-IV class submarines which can each carry 16 SS-23 missiles. Mr Smirnov said that launching satellites will enable Russian crews to retain their technical skills, which are being lost through lack of test firing.

American satellite companies have complained that the Russians are undercutting their business with cheap launches.

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Shanghai opens to British flights

CHINA HAS agreed to give British airlines direct access to Shanghai for the first time and allow more flights between London and Peking. John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, said yesterday.

Although some details of the air-passenger service agreement were still being worked out, Mr Prescott said the deal was a significant achievement of what he called his "successful and productive" week-long visit to China.

Under the air services agreement Mr Prescott sealed with China's Vice-Premier Wu Bangguo, British carriers will begin two flights a week to Shanghai this year with two more to be added in 2000.

Weekly flights between London and Peking will rise to five next summer and six a year later. It has not been decided which British carriers would get access.

Mr Prescott hailed the agreement as "a significant

step forward" in aviation relations between the two countries.

"I have no doubt that increased trade, business and tourism will justify further increases in air services soon," he said.

Mr Prescott also met China's foreign trade minister, Shi Guangsheng, who called for British help in getting Europe to lift trade restrictions on Chinese goods, including bans on frozen chicken and seafood.

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COMPAGNIES ARE STANDEE PAYEES

Honour saved by the art squad

THREE WORKS by Van Gogh and Cézanne, stolen from Rome's National Gallery of Modern Art in May, were recovered by Italian police early yesterday in raids on apartments in Rome and Turin.

L'Arlesienne and *Le Jardinier* by Van Gogh, and Cézanne's *Le Cabanon de Jourdan* were without their frames but otherwise appeared to be in perfect condition when displayed at a press conference in Rome.

Eight people, including a female member of the Modern Art Gallery's security staff, were arrested in the operation, said the chief of the Carabinieri police art squad, General Roberto Conforti, who co-ordinated the search for the missing canvases.

The inquiry, he added, was continuing and more arrests were expected. Of the two works found in Rome, one was discovered wrapped in blankets under a bed while the other was on top of a wardrobe.

The works, valued at £25m, were stolen on the night of 19 May in the first armed robbery in an Italian museum since 1992. The three female guards

BY ANNE HANLEY
in Venice

on duty were forced at gunpoint to de-activate the gallery's alarm system as three hooded thieves removed the oil paintings from a room containing works by leading 19th-century artists, including Degas, Monet, Courbet and Klimt.

The gallery's night staff were left bound, gagged and unable to notify police, who arrived on the scene hours after the robbers had made their getaway.

Only after the theft was the gallery's alarm system linked up to a police switchboard.

The crime provoked a storm of criticism over museum security. "This was a bleeding honour that Italy didn't deserve," the Deputy Prime Minister, Walter Veltroni, said. "Today the wound is closed."

Investigators have been on the trail of the thieves for the past month, General Conforti said. He told a press conference that the inquiry began with close surveillance, including phone taps, of security staff at the gallery.

Italian police and carabinieri show the two recovered Van Gogh (left and far right) and the Cézanne stolen from Rome



Plinio Lepri/AP

Italian police and carabinieri show the two recovered Van Gogh (left and far right) and the Cézanne stolen from Rome

BY ANNE HANLEY
in Venice

The general said all the people involved were professional thieves with criminal records. The heist was not carried out on commission, and a buyer for the works was still being sought, he added.

The two Van Goghs were the only works by the Dutch artist in Italian collections.

The general said all the people involved were professional thieves with criminal records. The heist was not carried out on commission, and a buyer for the works was still being sought, he added.

The latest success for Gen-

eral Conforti's art squad, which worked closely with civilian police in the operation, provides a fresh boost for the reputation of a body which now recovers around 50 per cent of all art and artefacts reported stolen in Italy.

Art thefts fell by 40 per cent in the early months of this year

according to the Cultural Heritage Ministry.

While so many other de-

partments of the Italian state appear incapable of functioning efficiently, the art squad stands out, mysteriously, as something of an exception.

Italy's museums, private

churches possess about one-third of the world's known historic art works.

But traditionally little atten-

tion has been paid to ensuring security for this vast heritage. Between 1970 and 1996 about 470,000 items went missing.

Many of these treasures

have been taken from small local museums and churches which can barely afford to provide sufficient lighting for their art works, let alone install effective alarm systems.

In an attempt to stem the flow of art losses, the ministry last year set up a special £170m five-year fund for improving security in Italy's museums.

US delegation sounds out Nigeria

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

UNCERTAINTY OVER the timing of the release of Moshood Abiola, Nigeria's most prominent political prisoner and the man deprived of the Presidency in the voided election of 1993, is a sobering reminder of the obstacles in the way of a stable and credible democracy in Africa's most populous country.

Last night, as the weightiest US delegation in five years arrived in the country for talks, Chief Abiola's return to freedom still seemed only days, if not hours away, and could be finalised when the new military ruler, Abdulsalami Abubakar, this week sets out his plans to return Nigeria to civilian rule.

But although the Chief is understood to have dropped his claim to be immediately in-



Abubakar: Has already freed 30 political prisoners

stalled as President, saying he wants to focus on rebuilding his former massive business interests, the picture is not quite so simple. If their leader seems to have accepted the view of Europe and the UN that he no longer has a popular mandate to take over, Abiola supporters have not.

Last night, the leader of the visiting American team Thomas Pickering, the State Department's third ranking official, was drawn into the dispute, as the main opposition group urged him not to repeat the mistake of the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan last week, of staying "closeted in [the capital] Abuja" and failing to meet "credible opposition

groups". These groups, mostly based in Lagos in the south, insist Chief Abiola should head a provisional government of

national unity that would prepare the ground for elections. Otherwise, they contend, there is no guarantee the country will not slide back into military dictatorship, whatever the good intentions of General Abubakar.

Thus the Chief's release may yet be delayed, clouding the euphoria since the death of General Sani Abacha, whose brutal rule made Nigeria an international outcast, suspended from the Commonwealth and subject to diplomatic and political sanctions.

In the four weeks since General Abubakar has already freed 30 of Nigeria's estimated

250 or more political prisoners and signalled he intends to hand power back to civilian politicians. He has purged one of General Abacha's most pow-

erful and feared advisers, the security chief Major Hamza al-Mustapha, replacing him with a close colleague. But his handling of Chief Abiola will be the acid test.

Renewed ties with the US are an important part of the process of rehabilitation. Nigeria is the biggest market in Africa for the US, which is the main customer for Nigeria's oil, its most important export. As

Africa's most populous and potentially richest country, Nigeria is a key regional power and - assuming General Abubakar is as good as his word - a natural strategic partner for Washington.

Even so, Nigeria's return to the international fold will not be overnight. The Commonwealth and others will not

overly object.

a return to political normality, but says the membership suspension will not be lifted until elections are held.

Originally the deadline was 1 October, but that had already been made a mockery by General Abacha, who had lined himself up as the sole candidate, backed by five officially approved parties.

General Abubakar is expected to seek a delay when he spells out his plans for Nigeria's future later this week, and one Lagos paper predicted he may put the election back by up to a year, to allow new parties to be registered and organised.

But provided the end is not in doubt, and a monitoring process is in place, the Commonwealth and others will not

death is not known. "Gomez" said they "were not nuns, they worked as couriers for the left".

He said their disappearance was managed by another navy officer, Jorge "Tigre" Acosta, but did not say how they were killed, only what happened to their bodies. "When the women you call nuns were eliminated, they were put in a drum which was dumped in a river.

Using the alias Mario Gomez, he threatened a reporter from *Perfil* newspaper, which published the interview yesterday, saying that she would "have 24 hours to live" if she revealed his true identity.

"Gomez" said he was a senior officer in a federal police task group - the official euphemism for the death squads - during the 1976-83 military dictatorship. The operations that his group carried out included the death of the nuns, Leonor Duquet and Alice Domon, in 1977. They are among thousands of people who disappeared into torture centres. Some were thrown into the ocean from "death flights", others were buried in secret graves.

Human rights groups estimate that 30,000 died or disappeared in the dirty war. Official records list 13,000.

The nuns' kidnapping is blamed on former navy captain Alfredo Astiz, dubbed the "Blond Angel", a notorious death squad officer who has been sentenced *in absentia* by French courts to life in prison.

The programme also ensures the preservation of a 1,650ft protection zone established around the museum by Unesco in 1979, and it will offer economic incentives for the surrounding city of Oswiecim, which has a population of 50,000.



The cross that is upsetting Jews

Reuters

Death squad 'dumped French nuns in river'

AN ARGENTINE former police officer has broken two decades' silence to talk about the disappearance of two French nuns in the dictatorship's "dirty war", saying that their bodies were put in a sealed drum and dumped in a river.

Using the alias Mario Gomez, he threatened a reporter from *Perfil* newspaper, which published the interview yesterday, saying that she would "have 24 hours to live" if she revealed his true identity.

"Gomez" said he was a senior officer in a federal police task group - the official euphemism for the death squads - during the 1976-83 military dictatorship. The operations that his group carried out included the death of the nuns, Leonor Duquet and Alice Domon, in 1977. They are among thousands of people who disappeared into torture centres. Some were thrown into the ocean from "death flights", others were buried in secret graves.

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The nuns were helping the human rights group Mothers of Plaza de Mayo when it was infiltrated by Astiz. They are believed to have been taken to the navy's ESMA torture centre, but the exact circumstances of their

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Polish cross stalls Auschwitz accord

A CONTROVERSY over a large cross outside the former Nazi death camp at Auschwitz may keep Jewish groups from signing a declaration supporting the Polish government's efforts to renovate the camp and its surrounding area.

The Polish authorities and representatives of Jewish organisations were supposed to sign the declaration in mid-July. But an aide to the Polish Prime Minister, Jerzy Buzek, told the *Rzecpospolita* newspaper that the declaration will not be signed then as planned.

Agustyn Magdziak-Miszewski said leaders of the World Jewish Congress have suggested they cannot sign the declaration, which received preliminary approval in March

1997 from representatives of about 30 Jewish organisations, because they object to the presence of the cross near the camp. Jewish organisations argue that the 26ft cross disturbs the memory of the more than one million Jews who died there - and they want it removed.

For other Poles, the cross, located where 152 Nazi resisters were murdered in 1941, remains a symbol of the nation's martyrdom under the Second World War German occupation.

Krystof Slivinski, a Polish Foreign Ministry official in charge of Polish-Jewish relations, said that the issue may be discussed when Poland's Prime Minister meets Jewish leaders during his visit to the United States - a visit which is ex-

pected to begin on Thursday. Work on the 10-year, \$83.5m redevelopment at Auschwitz began last year. Poland has earmarked 60 million zlotys (\$20m) over five years for the project.

Among the main additions will be a link between Auschwitz and Birkenau, the former camp's two integral parts, which are some 1.8 miles apart. Officials hope it will encourage more people to visit both parts of the camp.

The programme also ensures the preservation of a 1,650ft protection zone established around the museum by Unesco in 1979, and it will offer economic incentives for the surrounding city of Oswiecim, which has a population of 50,000.

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'I'm a prostitute - I have no choice, so I lose no self-respect'



Moscow prostitutes - the profession is high on the list of schoolgirls' favoured jobs
Helen Womack

Smart missile scares Lebanon

ISRAEL HAS introduced a new anti-personnel rocket into its guerrilla war in occupied southern Lebanon, a four-foot missile which can be guided over mountains, through valleys and round houses in its search for a target.

Code-named "Spike", the new weapon has already been used at least twice in southern Lebanon - both times at night - and has been observed by soldiers of the United Nations' Finnish peacekeeping battalion.

An Amal militiaman was killed and three others wounded when the rocket sought them out near the village of Toulin earlier this year.

The missile appears to be guided to its target either by a control point on the rocket's fuselage - a remote-controlled television camera, for example - or by a line-of-sight controller positioned near the potential victim.

At Toulin, guerrilla sources suspect Israeli troops may have approached the village and remotely guided the weapon - fired from a neighbouring hilltop bunker - on to the guerrillas.

Its disadvantage, noticed by both Finnish UN personnel and by Amal, is that it makes a roaring sound as it approaches its target and emits a three-foot tongue of flame from the rear of the missile.

It was the sound of its engine that alerted the four Amal men, giving three of them time to throw themselves to the ground and avoid serious injury.

The "Spike" is believed to be made by the Israeli Raphael missile company, which at present has close technical and financial links with the US Lockheed aerodynamics company in Florida.

But the missile has not had a happy career. Weapons specialists believe it was an early model of the "Spike" - apparently intended to be used in an assassination attempt against Saddam Hussein or against the leader of the Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon, Sayed Hassan Nasrallah - that exploded prematurely and killed five Israeli soldiers in the early 1990s. At the time, Israel would only say that five of its men had died in an explosion during a weapons experiment in a southern Lebanon.

In southern Lebanon, the "Spike" was seen climbing over a mountain, flying round the side of a ravine, swooping into a "wadi" and then turning to head for the village of Toulin.

If it was considered a suitable means of attacking the Iraqi leadership five years ago - when it would presumably

THE REAL-LIFE tales of Russia in transition to capitalism are almost always full of pain. Even the success stories have a certain bitterness to them. I suppose this must count as a case of achievement, for it is about a young woman who has won her independence, who has bought her own flat, who is among the top 1.5 per cent of wage earners in the country. She has higher education. And the only way she has managed to get where she is today is by selling herself as a prostitute.

Nadia is not one of the tarts who stands on the main Tverskoi Street, in Moscow, serving the visitors who come out of the Intourist Hotel on one side and the politicians who emerge from the State Duma or lower house of parliament on the other.

She advertises in the discreet "Introductions" section of the *Moscow Times*. An intelligent woman with a rare ability to analyse her own situation dispassionately, she has agreed to talk to me without charging money. I think because she wants to explain herself and to be understood.

We meet on a bench under the trees on Tverskoi Boulevard. I recognise Nadia immediately from her description of herself: petite, blonde. She is tastefully dressed in black trousers, blue and green silk blouse and denim jacket and

STREET LIFE SAMOTECHNY LANE, MOSCOW

wears far less makeup than the average Russian secretary.

Nadia, 35, grew up in a village in Siberia and studied to become an engineer. She ended up in her present profession five years ago after her marriage to a Muscovite broke down and she suddenly found herself alone in the capital with nowhere to live. "I had a choice: either to go back to Siberia or to try and make a go of it here. There's no work now in Siberia, where the vast majority of people have not been paid for months. So I decided to stay in Moscow, renting a flat at first."

Nadia has come to our meeting armed with facts and figures. From her handbag, she pulls out a cutting from a newspaper, which states that although Russian prices have reached world levels, wages have not caught up. Nineteen per cent of Russians earn the equivalent of US\$70 a month, 20 per cent make 100, 18 per cent have 120 and so on. Only 1.5 per cent of the population can count on a monthly income of over \$300. Nadia is one of them. After paying all her work expenses, Nadia is left with between \$600 and

\$700, for which she will have slept with 20 to 30 men each month.

"A lot of the money goes to buy medicines for my mother," she says, taking out a photograph of a prematurely aged woman, her legs covered in varicose veins, sitting outside a wooden house in Siberia. "My mum worked for 45 years as a teacher of Russian Literature in the village school. Her pension today is worth \$50 a month. She has no idea what I am doing in Moscow. If she found out, it would kill her. She thinks I have a good job in a firm."

Nadia passes her spare time improving her English. "Your English is not bad," I say, "and you're a qualified engineer. Why don't you study and honest work get them nowhere."

"Because nobody pays a living wage. I've had other jobs. I worked in a restaurant, for example. I earned \$100 a month and got shouted at all the time. If I'm going to be humiliated, I'd rather be humiliated for a decent sum of money."

And so she acts as lover, psychologist and social worker to an endless stream of inadequate foreign men. "I prefer foreigners to Russians because they're safer," she says. "On the whole, the Western businessmen who come to Russia are not maniacs, something you cannot say about our men."

She may be right about that. Lyuba, another prostitute with whom I spoke before meeting Nadia, gave horrifying details of violence she had suffered at the hands of Russian mafia clients. On one occasion, she had been nearly drowned in a plunge pool when a gangland party in a sauna bath got out of hand. But Lyuba is the sort of Russian who puts a brave face on suffering. She actually said she enjoyed her job because she "liked meeting people".

A recent survey showed that prostitution is high on the list of professions that modern Russian schoolgirls dream of pursuing. "It's hardly surprising," says Nadia, "when they see that studying and honest work get them nowhere."

Nadia herself is plotting her escape from the sex trade. She thinks she may rent out her flat in the city centre, rent a cheaper flat for herself on the outskirts and live on the difference. But first she must build up her savings, which means another year or two on the game.

"Of course I accept society's view that prostitution is a dirty business," she says. "In the West, women have a chance to use their qualifications and are not reduced to this. But since I have no choice, I feel no loss of self-respect. I think you cannot condemn me too harshly. After all, it's not my fault."

HELEN WOMACK



A man celebrates the opening of the San Fermin bull-run fiesta in Pamplona amid a sea of Basque flags and scarves. Starting today, hundreds of people will run with six fighting bulls through the streets during the nine-day event
Paul White/AP

IN BRIEF

Diplomats try to restore calm with tour of Kosovo battlefields

DIPLOMATS FROM Britain, the United States, Russia, Poland and the European Union yesterday set out on a patrol into the Serbian province of Kosovo, visiting an area where more than 80 people died last March, and said their goal was to prevent a recurrence.

The observers went north to Mitrovica, then headed west to the edge of the Drenica triangle, a hardcore ethnic Albanian stronghold surrounded by Serbian checkpoints.

The trip was largely symbolic, to initiate a more thorough system of international patrols sought by Kosovo's ethnic Albanian majority to monitor activities of Serbian security forces, and by Serbs to check on Albanian separatist guerrillas. Richard Miles, chief of mission at the US embassy in Belgrade, said the patrols were intended to help efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Kosovo crisis.

French vote on New Caledonia

LEGISLATORS MET yesterday in Versailles to give final ratification to an agreement that could lead to complete independence for the French territory of New Caledonia. Deputies and senators were expected to vote overwhelmingly in favour of the Noumea agreement, which provides for a 20-year transition to independence.

Tran-Siberian railway blockade

SEBANE COAL miners blocked the Trans-Siberian railway for a fourth day yesterday while other labour unions, sought to have the blockade lifted to keep their own industries going. At least 29 freight trains with as much as 250 tons of cargo were halted yesterday, the Russian railway ministry said.

Death urged for cult member

JAPANESE PROSECUTORS yesterday asked for the death sentence for a member of the doomsday cult linked to the 1995 Tokyo subway gas attack. The sentence was demanded at the trial of Kazuaki Okazaki, 37, who is charged with the 1989 murders of lawyer Tsutsumi Sakamoto, his wife and one-year-old baby son.

It was the first death sentence sought for members of the Aum Shinrikyo (Supreme Truth) sect, whose leaders are also on trial for a sarin nerve gas attack on Tokyo subway trains in 1995 which killed 12 people and made thousands ill.

France acts to stop BSE

A NEW case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) - or "mad cow disease" - has been found in the Loire Valley region in central France and the animal was destroyed, the farming ministry said yesterday. It was the seventh case reported in France this year, and the 37th since 1996. Britain has been worst affected by BSE. The European Union imposed a beef export ban on Britain after the Government admitted in March 1996 a possible link between the disease and its fatal human equivalent, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

CHARLES MILLER

Lobbying is about the governed seeking to have a say in decisions made by people they elect and whose salaries they pay'

— THE TUESDAY REVIEW, PAGE 5

Singer hits a fatal note

DRUNKEN REVELLERS fatally stabbed a man after he sang an off-key rendition of a popular love song, "Hemmer Me", at a Manila pub. His rendition drew jeers from 10 men, who later attacked the singer with knives, bottles, wooden clubs and a gun, police said.

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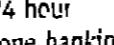
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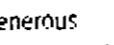
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BUSINESS

BRIEFING

London and German bourse link

THE LONDON stock exchange looked on the brink of a surprise alliance with the German bourse yesterday, after market sources said the two rivals were planning a joint news conference for today.

Speculation of a tie-up between the two exchanges were fuelled by a mysterious announcement late yesterday from the German bourse that it would hold a press conference in London this morning. Deutsche Börse and the LSE, declined to comment on the content of the announcement.

The two exchanges have been locked in a fierce battle to become Europe's financial centre after the launch of the euro in 1999.

US insurers turn down Viagra



TWO BIG US health insurers said they were refusing to pay for Viagra, the anti-impotence drug developed by Pfizer, the pharmaceuticals giant. Prudential Healthcare, a division of Prudential Insurance of the US, said there was too little clinical data to prove that the drug was totally safe for the elderly, often ill men who might use it. Humana Inc, a rival health insurer, was also reported to be refusing to pay for the drug.

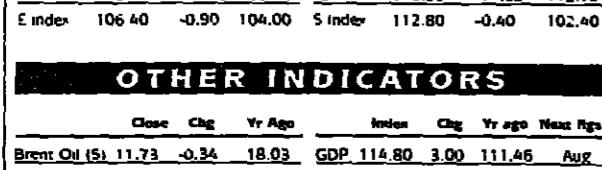
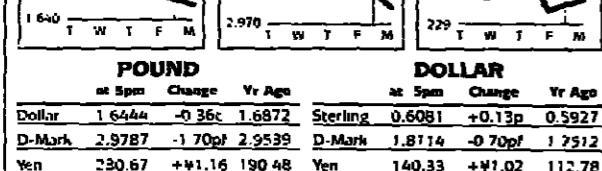
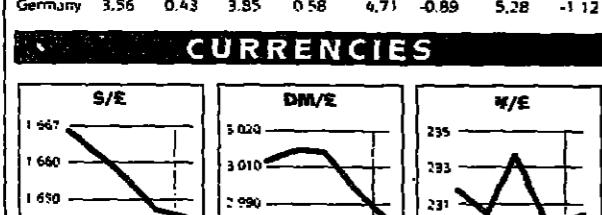
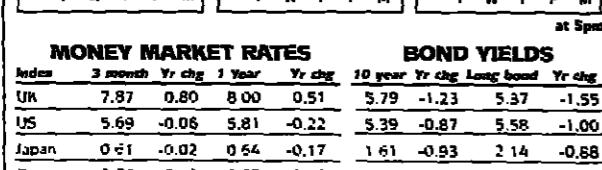
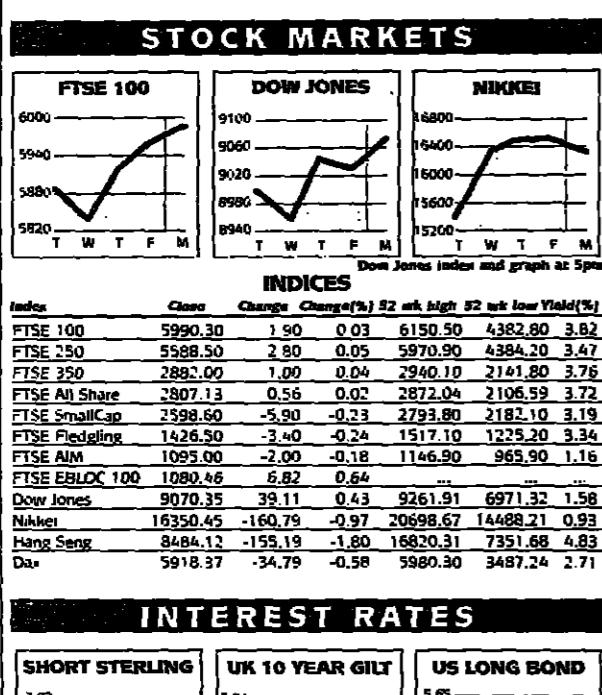
Diageo takes US court action

DIAGEO, the spirits group formed from the merger of Guinness and Grand Metropolitan last year, has asked the US court in Santiago, Texas, to intervene in a dispute and issue an injunction against tequila producer Jose Cuervo. The tequila group wants to have the terms of its distribution agreement changed following the £24bn merger. It is arguing that the deal constitutes a "change of control" and that it should have the right to renegotiate its supply and distribution contract with Diageo.

Diageo filed papers with the US court on 2 July, asking for the existing agreement to be kept in place. Diageo said the group is "very confident" that it will succeed in its action.

The news came as Diageo unveiled a disappointing trading statement that featured higher-than-expected tax charges and continued impact on profits from currency fluctuations.

Investment Column, page 19



JOHN DEVANEY, chairman of the electricity supplier Eastern, is poised to quit and launch his own bid for one of the power stations being sold by PowerGen.

Mr Devaney had been expected to leave Eastern after the £4.45bn takeover of its parent, Energy Group, by the US utility, Texas Industries.

But it is understood that he would like to find a niche that would allow him to stay in the electricity industry and run his

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

own business as well. Taking over PowerGen power station would let him to do just that.

Mr Devaney will decide in the next week whether to enter the bidding. If he does, then Eric Anstee, Energy Group's finance director, is likely to partner him in the venture.

The two men already have several other joint business interests, including an engineer-

ing firm and a marine publisher.

Mr Devaney joined Eastern in 1992 from Varley Corporation,

while Mr Anstee arrived from Ernst & Young, where he was a partner a year later.

PowerGen has offered to sell off 2,000 megawatts of generating capacity in return for permission to proceed with its £1.9bn bid for East Midlands Electricity. The station likely to be sold is Ferrybridge in Yorkshire, raising £400m to £500m.

However, industry observers believe PowerGen is almost certain to be told to sell off a lot more to increase competition in the generating market. The Government has made disposal of coal-fired power stations by the two price-setters – PowerGen and National Power – central to its energy policy.

The regulator, Professor Stephen Littlechild, is consulting on how much should be disposed of amid indications that

he wants both generators to offload 6,000 to 8,000 megawatts.

Eastern is now number five in the market, with 10 per cent, after buying 6,000 megawatts of capacity from National Power and PowerGen in 1996 – but it would be barred from taking part in the latest auction.

PowerGen has received ten expressions of interest. Other would-be bidders are thought to include Mission Energy of the US, that took over the Nation-

al Grid's pumped storage stations; Centrica, the demerged trading arm of British Gas; Southern Electric, and Southern Company of Georgia, that owns SWEA and once considered bidding for National Power.

If Devaney and Anstee leave it will be a clean sweep of Energy Group's top people. Derek Bonham, executive chairman, has already indicated he intends to leave, and may build his own mini conglomerate.

DTI to step in to save BA deal

BY MICHAEL HARRISON

THE GOVERNMENT is set to broker a deal to keep alive the British Airways alliance with American Airlines in the face of tough conditions due to be imposed on the deal tomorrow by Brussels.

The European Competition Commissioner, Karel Van Miert, is expected to insist that the two airlines forfeit at least 260 runway slots in London in return for approving the alliance. Mr Van Miert is also insisting that BA should not be able to trade the slots.

However, BA is now pinning its hopes on the Department of Trade and Industry amending the European Commission's terms. This might involve some changes in the number of slots to be surrendered and extensions to the time-scale over which they have to be given up.

The DTI has the regulatory responsibility for vetting the deal on this side of the Atlantic. The Office of Fair Trading initially recommended the deal be cleared provided BA and AA surrendered 168 slots, while the Commission initially wanted 350 slots to be given up.

BA sources indicated that if a smaller number of slots were to be sacrificed then it might be prepared to hand them back free rather than selling them to rivals.

Whitehall officials stressed that the Government was not seeking a confrontation with Brussels over the BA-AA tie-up. But one said: "The Commissioner's announcement will leave a lot of loose ends to be tied up and the devil will be in the detail. The game will not be over at that point."

If the alliance fails to proceed then there will be no "open skies" agreement on transatlantic air services designed to increase the number of carriers and improve competition.

BA shares rose 19p to 689p as dealers bet that the alliance was at last on the point of being given the go-ahead. BA and AA first announced the link up two years ago. Even after Brussels has ruled they still need approval from the US Department of Transportation.

The effect of the payment on Chiroscience's accounts for the current financial year is set to be around £250,000, as the company has already made a £1m provision for the case in its latest annual report.

CHIROSCIENCE, one of the UK's leading biotechnology companies, yesterday agreed to pay £3.35m to Nowell Stebbing, its former chief executive, after a last-minute settlement ended a two-year long legal battle.

The two parties agreed the payment, which includes around £255,000 costs, just minutes before the case was due to be heard by a High Court judge.

Chiroscience shares were marked down after the news of the settlement and closed the day 8p lower at 265.5p.

The company will pay around £2m of the total through yesterday's placement of around 800,000 existing shares, part of its employee share ownership plan, with institutional investors.

The company claimed that at the time of his appointment as executive director, Dr Stebbing had agreed to forfeit



Nowell Stebbing sued Chiroscience over the withdrawal of share options

Chiroscience to pay £3m to former chief

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

est results published in February.

In February 1996, Dr Stebbing sued Chiroscience for damages, believed to be up to £9m, over the withdrawal of a number of share options awarded to him before and after the company's flotation in February 1994. He claimed the company wrongfully removed part of the options issued before the listing when he became a non-executive director in May 1995.

Dr Stebbing had already stepped down from chief executive to deputy chairman in 1993 when he discovered he had stomach cancer. He decided to move to a non-executive position two years later and negotiated his new contract with the then chairman Henry Simon.

The company claimed that at the time of his appointment as executive director, Dr Stebbing had agreed to forfeit

around two-thirds of his options if he were to move to a non-executive position.

Dr Stebbing left the company in August 1995 with a £101,000 compensation package. Later that year he exercised all of his remaining options, netting £62m.

He was also suing the company for wrongful dismissal, but it is understood that claim has now been dropped.

Dr Stebbing appeared elated when the settlement was announced in the High Court but refused to comment outside the chamber. In a later statement, he said: "It has been a very prolonged, expensive and stressful matter trying to obtain even a part of what Chiroscience took away from me."

John Padfield, Chiroscience's chief executive, said: "Although £3.35m is a significant sum to go to one individual, it is good to get the case out of the way and to move on."

Outlook, page 15

Source: Barclays Capital

Ministers act on EU arms strategy

SIX European Union defence ministers last night met to set out a plan of action to help Europe's defence industry restructure to meet the challenges of US competition.

The six ministers – from the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Sweden – gathered to sign a letter of intent at Lancaster House, London. The letter provides a framework for developing concrete practical measures governments

can take to assist the industry-led restructuring process.

The Ministry of Defence said the letter of intent identified potential obstacles to restructuring in six key areas and possible means of removing them. Working groups will be established to carry the work forward, and solutions to the problems will be set out in separate agreements.

The Ministry of Defence listed the six key areas as:

Security of supply – ensuring that countries can rely on each other to provide defence equipment.

Restructuring – ensuring that production is concentrated in other partner countries;

Export procedures – ensuring that companies will be able to export major systems, including sub-systems manufactured in other partner nations;

Security of information – ensuring that classified information is protected when it is

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Doubt cast on Chancellor's figures

WITH THE Government all in a tizzy about its relationship with business lobbyists, things are beginning to look decidedly sticky for the Government on the economic front too.

The row about how to treat the costs of the Working Families Tax credit may be indicative of more deep rooted problems in policy. On one level, this looks like a rather arcane argument about which side of the balance sheet to account for the measure. Certainly that is the manner in which the Government chose to reveal to the nation that the costs would be taken against tax rather than added to spending - via an obscure and at the time unpublicised answer to the Commons Treasury Select Committee.

Whether the £50 a year eventual cost of this policy is deducted from the tax take, or added to public spending in the round it makes even less sense. Either spending is higher by said amount, or the tax take is lower by it; whichever way the budget deficit or surplus remains the same.

However, there's plainly more to this than this. The Government has just published new public spending totals which allow for a real rise of 2.75 per cent per annum for the next three years. These figures are already



OUTLOOK

higher than might be considered prudent, but it now transpires that they did not include the spending on the Working Families Tax credit. Instead the Government plans to count this amount against tax.

Government projections for the tax take were beginning to look more than a little suspect even before this little tease came along, since they are based on the economy growing by 1.75 per cent this year; 2 per cent next, and 2.25 per cent thereafter.

These are still achievable rates of growth, but they look a good deal less certain now than they did. Fortunately for the Government, the WFTC effect has been built into Treasury projections of the total tax

take, but even so Government projections of a Budget surplus by the turn of the century begin to look a touch on the ambitious side.

In point of fact, the public finances in Britain are in much better shape than most of the rest of Europe, so it may not matter very much. However, the difference is that Continental Europe is still largely on the upside of the business cycle; in Britain we are now picking up speed down the other side.

If tax receipts fall a long way short of projections, then the public finances aren't going to look so great after all. Trouble is that the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, striving to meet Gordon Brown's inflation target, is more or less obliged to ensure that it does. Let's get this in perspective. The situation is not yet dire. But things are not going as swimmingly as they were for the Chancellor.

Mutuals need protection

IT IS hard to see how the Nationwide is ever going to put the lid finally on attempts by the carpet

bags to have the society demutualise. Having failed to get their people elected to the board last year they are back again with a raft of motions, all of which invite directors to consider conversion in some shape or form. Presumably, they'll just keep on returning until they

dwindling band of other mutuals, borrowing rates would almost certainly be higher and saving rates lower.

The problem is that though it might make financial sense for borrowers to remain mutual, the benefits for most savers, with relatively small amounts on deposit, tend to be much more marginal. To some extent, this inbuilt bias towards conversion is countered in the legislation, which requires savers to vote by a 75 per cent majority to convert against only 50 per cent for borrowers. All the same, Brian Davis, chief executive of Nationwide, is going to find it difficult to resist trade bids for Nationwide should the vote go against him even by a simple majority.

Since there appears so little protection under the law, rightly in some respects, the Government may have to find alternative ways of stepping into the fray if it wants to preserve what's left of the mutual tradition.

Any bid from an existing mortgage provider could possibly be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission on market share criteria. The Government might also give consideration to re-

ferring on the more contentious grounds that any conversion might damage the public interest by removing an important competitive force from the market.

More biotech controversy

WHAT IS it about the biotechnology sector? Even when a business is well run, has got products on the market and has managed to avoid the shooting star trajectory that characterises much of the industry, it still seems incapable of avoiding some controversy.

Chiroscience does not have quite the same problems with disgruntled former employees that British Biotech has. But the out of court settlement it reached yesterday with its one-time chief executive, Neil Stibbing, is still a painful reminder that in the area of contract law, it pays to tread carefully.

To recap briefly, Dr Stibbing joined the company in 1993 and helped steer it to flotation. Shortly afterwards ill health forced him to step into a non-executive role and he subsequently left the company

in August, 1995. Somewhere along the line, his contract was amended and Dr Stibbing lost two-thirds of his share options. He sued for breach of contract and wrongful removal of share options, claiming £9m in damages. The company settled yesterday for £3.25m, including costs.

Dr Stibbing says that had the disputed share options not been removed, the company would have been £24.2m better off when he exercised them, not £3.25m down on the deal.

The company says it has avoided the dilution that would have occurred had the options been exercised and, anyway, £2m of the cost has been met by placing shares held in an Employee Share Ownership Plan for the benefit, among others, of Dr Stibbing.

The more interesting question for shareholders is why the £9m claim was never mentioned in two annual reports and two capital raising exercises. Meanwhile Dr John Padfield, the new chief exec, might take one of the firm's analgesics to dull the pain of having wasted shareholders' money, and reflect that, as biotech horrors go, it could have been a lot, lot worse.

Investor fears push SA rand to new lows

BY MARY BRAID
in Johannesburg

SOUTH AFRICA'S beleaguered currency slumped to a new low yesterday as investors reacted badly to the appointment of ANC heavyweight Tito Mboweni as the first black governor of the Reserve Bank.

The rand, which has fallen 30 per cent against the US dollar since May, plummeted to 6.72 rand to the dollar and 11 rand to the pound soon after the markets opened for the first time after the announcement that Mr Mboweni, the labour minister, is to succeed Dr Chris Stals when he retires as central bank governor next year.

Initial fears that the currency would hit 7 rand to the dollar did not materialise when it rallied later in the day as foreign sellers bought back in.

It is thought the surprise announcement of Mr Mboweni's move to head the bank was made by President Nelson Mandela's government to end damaging speculation about Mr Stals's successor. With the rand in free fall, the timing was risky.

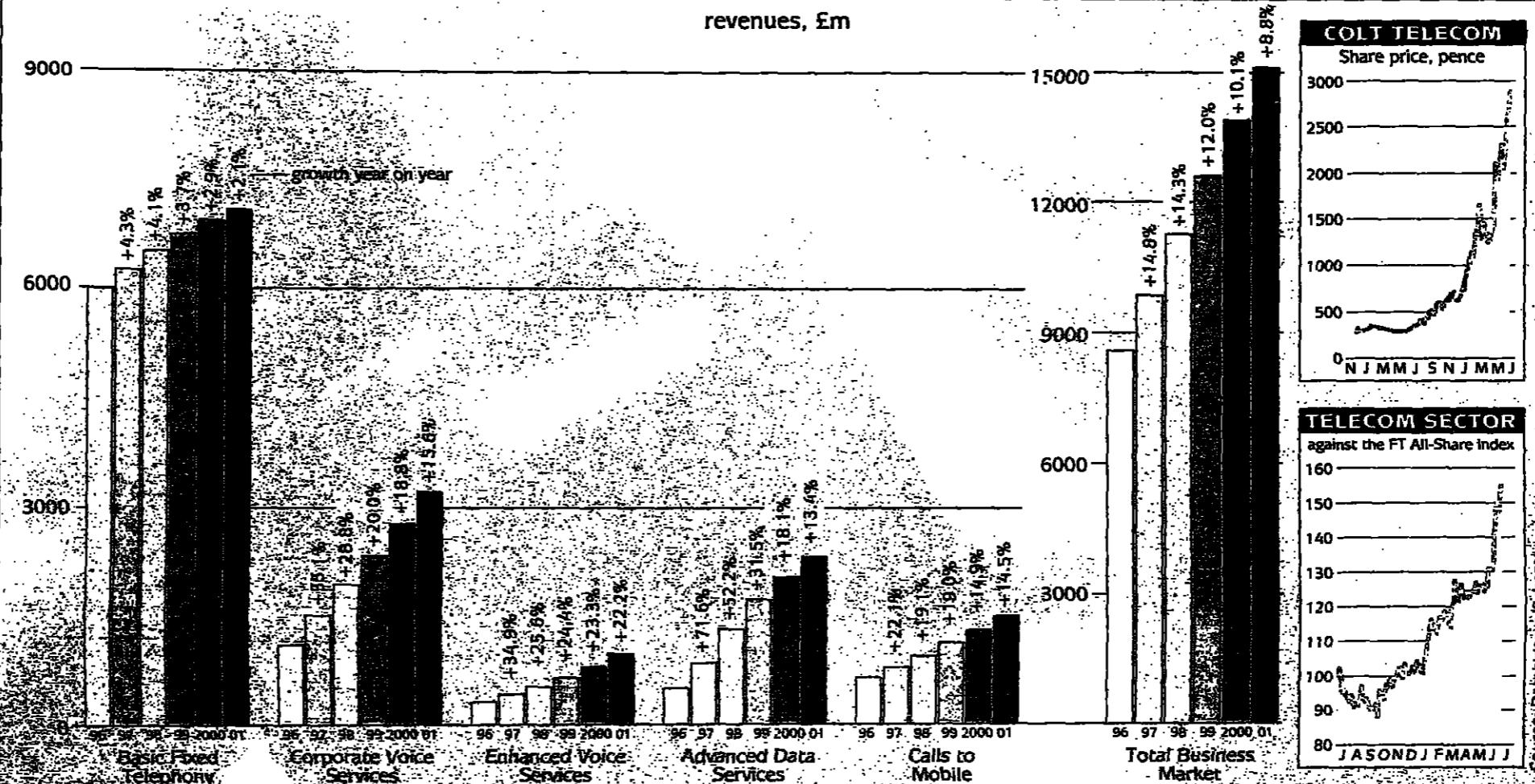
Critics suggested that the gains made by ending the speculation were wiped out by the choice of candidate. The bottom line, they said, is that an ambitious ANC politician with a left-wing reputation will soon be at the helm of the Reserve Bank.

James Cross, one of Mr Stals's deputies, would have been the financial establishment's choice. Although Mr Mboweni has an MA in development economics after study at East Anglia University, he has no direct banking experience. However, he has a year's apprenticeship under Mr Stals to come and says he is to study with London University economist Lawrence Harris.

But it is his politics which worry the sceptics. Financial experts insist that the bank's independence, though guaranteed in the constitution, will be in danger under Mr Mboweni.

However, Thabo Mbeki, President Mandela's likely successor, has said that a government which compromised the bank's independence would be "shooting itself in the foot".

GROWTH IN THE UK BUSINESS TELECOM MARKET



Telecoms mania grips City

News Analysis: Colt's network link-up with Racal was good for both groups' shares. But has the love affair with this sector gone too far?

BY PETER THAL LARSEN

THESE DAYS, there's never a dull moment in the telecoms sector. Yesterday Col Telecom, the local access operator which is building fibre-optic networks in London and other financial centres around Europe, announced a deal giving the telecoms arm of Racal, the electronics group, access to its network.

Although the deal is good news for both companies, it is of fairly limited significance.

Nevertheless, Colt shares jumped 6 per cent to 288p, while Racal shares put on 29p to close at 400p.

The share price reaction mirrors the City's price response to other titbits of news from telecoms companies. Last week, shares in Vodafone and Orange, the mobile operators, rose sharply as they unveiled strong subscriber growth in the second quarter of the year, causing some analysts to predict that in just four years' time one in two people in the UK will own a mobile phone. At the moment, it's one in eight.

A number of bullish analysts think telecoms stocks

have further to go. But some more cautious observers are beginning to wonder whether the City is being seduced by an overly rosy picture of the future. Although telecoms use - both fixed and mobile - will undoubtedly grow rapidly in coming years, is it possible that every company will be a winner?

Investors' love affair with telecoms stocks has been going on for about a year. During that period, the sector has outperformed the rest of the stock market by more than 50 per cent.

Large companies such as British Telecom and Cable & Wireless have put in decent performances. Other winners have been mobile operators such as Orange, whose shares have more than trebled in value, and Vodafone, which has more than doubled.

By far the biggest success story, however, has been Colt.

Floated at a share price of 275p late in 1996, the company's shares have risen tenfold in the

following 18 months. So much so that the company is now valued at £3.5bn and is on the verge of securing a place in the FTSE 100 index of leading shares. Not bad for a company that made revenues of just £22m last year.

The main driver of share prices has been increasingly bullish projections of demand. In fixed telecoms, investors have woken up to the huge increases in traffic that increased use of the Internet and other forms of data communication will bring. On the mobile side, analysts are even more optimistic about how quickly mobile phones will catch on, and how much people will use them.

The prospect of bids - helped by mega-deals such as WorldCom's merger with MCI and AT&T's acquisition of TCI - have lifted share prices even further.

But the sceptics raise several questions. First, they point out that supply of telecoms capacity could keep pace with

or even outstrip demand, thereby driving down prices.

Robin Duke-Woolley, a senior consultant at telecoms specialists Schema, admits that demand will rise sharply. He predicts that the amount of Internet traffic generated in Europe will rise from 51 billion minutes last year to almost 300 billion minutes by the year 2003. Over the same period, demand for private data networks will grow from the equivalent of 5.8 million lines capable of transmitting 64 kilobits of data per second to the equivalent of 49 million lines.

However, in many areas supply will keep pace - and may even outstrip - demand. Mr Duke-Woolley predicts that only companies that can keep their costs down while offering extra services will survive.

The cake will undoubtedly get larger and that means there will be some big winners. But there will be some big losers too," he says, adding that at the moment it is almost impossible

to tell who will win or lose.

The same argument applies to continental Europe. Since the beginning of the year, many telecoms stocks have risen as investors assumed that companies would make swift inroads into markets in continental Europe. So far, they have not been disappointed. Since January, new operators have snatched as much as 5 per cent of the market from former state monopolies such as France Telecom and Deutsche Telekom.

Once again, however, competition is fierce, with companies from the US, the UK, and the rest of Europe all scrabbling over new customers. Most have demanding targets. But sheer logic dictates that not all will succeed. And the risk is that intense price competition will undermine revenues for those companies who are successful.

In mobile telephony, a similar optimism prevails. Orange, the aggressive group which is the UK's fourth-largest operator, predicts that mobile penetration will be 50 per cent by 2003. The sceptics suggest that the market will be saturated by then. In mobile telephony, a similar optimism prevails. Orange, the aggressive group which is the UK's fourth-largest operator, predicts that mobile penetration will be 50 per cent by 2003. The sceptics suggest that the market will be saturated by then.

"It may be time for the UK

side of the mobile phone to take

a reality check," he says.

TE PERSONAL Investment Authority yesterday fined 41 small firms of independent financial advisers £157,000 over their slowness in reworking cases of pension mis-selling. The firms, many of whom sole traders, were fined an average of £4,000 each for missing the December deadline for reworking 90 per cent of their urgent cases.

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صيغنا من الادهيل

Recession talk will stop the real thing

YOU EVEN hear it in the street. A couple of people passed our house at the weekend and I caught this snitch of their conversation: "... of course, when the recession comes, all these places..."

They were, I think, chatting about the numerous estate agents' boards, but what struck me was not their view about the fragility of London house prices, but rather the use of the word "when". The idea that another recession is natural and inevitable has become deeply embedded in our national psyche.

It is not hard to see why: the long house price slump (much longer than the actual early 1990s recession), the daily tales of recession in East Asia and the string of newspaper stories about manufacturing gloom combine to remind us that bad times follow good.

In manufacturing there is indeed something of a mini-recession taking place. Yesterday's figures for May show manufacturing output flat year-on-year (but down on April) and industrial production up a fraction year-on-year (but down on April). Until these figures, you could just about believe that manufacturing had been recovering a bit since winter (see graph), but it is quite hard to believe that now. Unsurprisingly, business confidence is at its lowest level since 1992.



HAMISH MCRAE

As long as people think a recession is coming, it won't come – or at least, it probably won't come

But the picture of gloom is not universal. Take two other items of news yesterday. Car registrations in June totalled 169,789, up 11.9 per cent on the previous year. According to the CBI, financial services activity grew in the second quarter at its fastest level for a year (though the outlook has deteriorated since then). Remember, too, that manufacturing is only about 20 per cent of GDP, not much larger than financial and other business services. Unless something quite astonishing has happened, the sec-

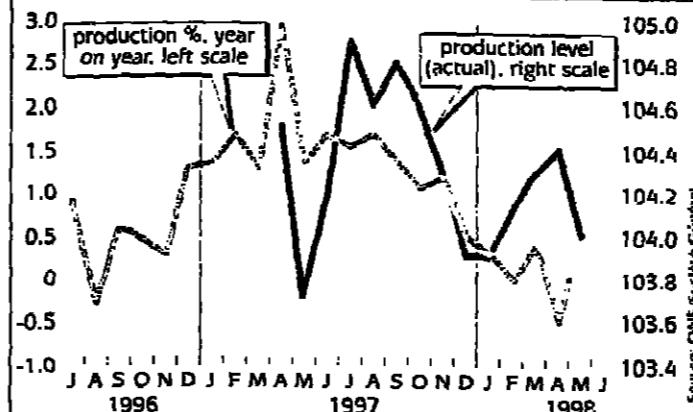
ond-quarter GDP figures ought to show some growth, probably running at an annual rate of close to 2 per cent.

So it is perfectly possible to have a recession in manufacturing and not in the economy as a whole, just as it was possible to have a recession in housing and not in the rest of the economy.

Expect this paradox of the "non-recession recession" to continue. We will get confusing data because, during any period of slow growth and rapid structural change, some bits of the economy will be in clear decline. They have to decline to make room, so to speak, for the bits which are expanding. For the last six years we have had generally rapid growth, so even the laggard sectors of the economy were pulled up to some extent. Now, with slower growth, the laggards will slip back.

What should be done about this? The key thing is not to make matters worse by clumsy intervention. At a macro-economic level we have made matters worse by moving interest rates up too slowly. Now we have got them up to a level where they should be high enough to curb demand, but we are in danger of making the opposite mistake of pushing them higher still. There is an outside chance that the Bank

UK MANUFACTURING – UP OR DOWN?



money out of mediocre products and fail to pay attention to their costs. They borrow too much and are sloppy in their investment plans. Individuals also borrow too much and rely on windfalls to pay off debt. The wealth effect of rising asset prices enables both groups to live above their means.

Then comes the forest fire. Weaker companies are taken over, weaker managements pensioned off. Individuals who have bid up their incomes beyond the level their skills justify find themselves having to take a cut in income. Some people lose their jobs.

Now the big question surely is this: can one gain the benefits of recession without actually having to have one?

It is impossible to give an unequivocal "yes" to that, but there is enough evidence to muster a "maybe". Look at the United States. Why has it been able to continue its expansion without much sign of a revival of inflation? Because intense competition, both internally and from abroad, helps to hold down prices. Because the economy is so large and so fluid, and because there are such strong cultural forces in favour of competition, the US can get very close to full capacity without generating a surge in inflation.

Here in the UK we don't have quite the same general level of competitive pressure, so more of the excess demand seeps through into higher prices. Nevertheless the UK economy is proving able to push much closer to its capacity limits now than it did in 1998 without generating excessive inflation.

Furthermore, the UK has one powerful advantage over the US: its awareness of the possibility of recession. Travel in the States and you see boom everywhere and no sense that it could ever end. That is dangerous. Here people are much more circumspect. We do not have the downward force on inflation exerted by US-style competition, but we do have a downward force exerted by our memory of the last recession. Provided we retain that caution, it becomes possible to nudge the economy to the slower-than-trend growth that is needed to bring inflationary pressures to an acceptable level.

So will there be a recession? Yes, of course eventually there will be a recession. But I think that is still a couple of years off, when the US and continental Europe turn down and East Asia remains flat. Meanwhile, expect much more talk of recession here, but also expect the overall economic numbers to keep creeping up.

BTP buys Italian firm for £100m

BTP THE Manchester-based fine chemical company, yesterday bought an Italian business in a further step towards transforming itself into an up-market producer of specialist ingredients and intermediate products for the pharmaceuticals industry.

BTP paid £75.9m in cash and £24.3m in BTP shares for Archimica, a privately-owned chemical company based outside Milan. The Italian vendors have agreed to retain the shares for at least 18 months. BTP also takes on a sum of debt worth £37.2m.

Archimica operates three companies producing chemicals for use in the pharmaceuticals industry. Many of its products are at the start of their market lives. BTP said yesterday: "This acquisition, which is in line

with BTP's strategy, places us among the world leaders in fine chemicals and further defines BTP's future in high-value life science molecules."

BTP has already made one major disposal this year, realising £8m through the sale of its adhesives and textile coatings division, and one major acquisition, buying French business Hexachimie in May for £5.5m in cash.

Group gearing has, however, risen from zero at year-end to 171 per cent of shareholders'

funds, which makes a disposal to raise fresh cash desirable. Analysts welcomed the fact that BTP confirmed yesterday that it had received unsolicited offers for its safety equipment division, which makes ladders, harnesses and belts, including some of the equipment used in building the Millennium Dome. "The division is less of a fit as we become increasingly focused," Mr Hamann said. The division is profitable, and a sale could raise up to £100m.

Last year BTP made profits of £53m on sales of £439m. Safety equipment accounted for 18 per cent of both operating profit and turnover. In the previous year the adhesive coatings division – now disposed of – accounted for 27 per cent of turnover and 11 per cent of group profits.

The deteriorating position in Asia and the continued strength of sterling have created a difficult trading background, and the re-evaluating of orders at BTP's US agro-chemicals business is expected to shift profits from the first to the second half of the year.

Despite this the shares gained 11p to 541p yesterday, and have more than doubled in the past year.

EMU and risk top banks' list of concerns

DOOR RISK management, the launch of European monetary union and the Year 2000 computer bug are three issues of greatest concern for banks and their regulators, a report finds.

The industry's new watchdog and the Asian financial crisis also feature in "Banking banana skins", an annual survey by the Centre for the Study of Financial Information (CSFI) which identifies issues of concern to the banking sector.

Top of the list is inadequate control of risk. Many respondents believe that banks are failing to control risks, either intentionally, because they want to cut corners in an attempt to boost profitability or unintentionally, because internal controls are not up to scratch. The survey found concern about a widespread ignorance of the dangers of complex financial instruments such as derivatives, as well as about the growth of proprietary trading.

The impact of the Millennium Bug and EMU on the global financial system also feature on respondents' "worry lists".

BY LEA PATERSON

Lord Tugendhat, the chairman of Abbey National, told the CSFI: "I am worried that mistakes in implementing the changes required for EMU and the Year 2000 could set off a chain reaction throughout the international financial system. I do not regard this as likely, but it cannot be assumed that all will go well."

Some in the industry were worried about the quality of bank management. One respondent, who asked not to be identified, said: "Me-tooism is still very much a feature of banking in most countries... The quality of management at the likes of Deutsche Bank, Dresdner and the big French and Italian banks leaves a lot to be desired."

The new Financial Services Authority (FSA) was another source of worry. A UK bank chairman told the CSFI that he doubted the ability of the FSA, the Bank of England and the Treasury to work amicably and effectively together.

Billiton buys out coal stakes

THE South African mining group Billiton cheered investors yesterday by using part of its mounting cash pile to buy the remaining stakes it did not own in the world's largest thermal coal exporter, Ingwe Coal Corporation, writes Terry Macalister.

Billiton also bought outstanding shares in Ingwe's parent group, Trans-Natal Coal Corporation, as part of the £283m deal, which led to Billiton's shares being marked up 10.5p to 138p.

Investors have been nervous about how Billiton would use its £2bn cash mountain. "This is not a silly deal and the market as a whole is pretty pleased with it," said analysts at Paribas Capital Markets.

Both Ingwe and Trans-Natal will become wholly owned subsidiaries of Billiton and no longer be listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Ingwe has 11 operations in South Africa and two in Australia. Its thermal coal is used as fuel for power stations.

MATTHEW CLARK, the Dry Blackthorn and Diamond White cider group, delivered more bad news for the beleaguered cider market yesterday when it announced plans to close its Taunton production facility at the end of the year with the loss of more than 100 jobs.

The news accompanied a 52p fall in full-year profit to £35.8m and a dramatic cut in the dividend. The company blamed the performance on a fiercely competitive cider market where volumes have fallen by 5 per cent over the year as cider struggles against increased competition from other long drinks like lager. Matthew Clark's brands underper-

formed the market and its volumes fell by 10 per cent. However, Hugh Etheridge, Matthew Clark's finance director, vowed to win back cider drinkers with a combination of new products and an increase in marketing spending.

"We have to make cider more relevant and get away from the joke image," he said adding that the rural "straw-in-the-ears" image of cider still persists. He said Matthew Clark would target the key 20-30 year age group, which has drifted away from cider, principally to heavily promoted lager brands.

The company is planning to invest more marketing support behind its key products. Blackthorn cider has been re-launched with a £5m advertising campaign. Diamond White has also been re-styled and backed by a £2m campaign. The board said its decision to close the Taunton plant, together with its new facilities at Shepton Mallet, would cost £16m but yield annual savings of £3m. There will be an exceptional charge of £8m to cover the costs.

While Matthew Clark admitted that its cider division had underperformed, it said cider only accounted for 23 per cent of group profits. Its wholesaling

business increased profits from £7m to £8.4m and margins rose by nearly half a percentage point.

In the wine market, its Stowells of Chelsea "wine in a box" brand now has 58 per cent of the box market. Its volumes grew by 13 per cent in a market up 5 per cent.

While there have been rumours of takeover action it is understood that Matthew Clark has neither made nor received any approaches.

Matthew Clark shares which touched 80p in 1996, closed 4p higher at 84p. Group turnover fell from £570m to £533m. The dividend was cut from 24p per share to 13p.

Tomkins to spend up to £750m on acquisitions

THE BUNS TO GUNS group Tomkins yesterday revealed plans to spend up to £750m on new acquisitions but insisted they would be in sectors where it was already present.

Attempting to shrug off his company's image as an under-performing conglomerate, chairman Greg Hutchings said he was now focusing on three main areas.

The future of professional garden and leisure businesses, including the handgun manufacturer Smith & Wesson, remained "under review", but Tomkins would concentrate on construction, food, plus industrial and automotive parts.

Unveiling a 16 per cent in-

crease in pre-tax profits to a record £50.4m, Mr Hutchings said he was prepared to spend as much as last year's £74.2m on add-on buys.

"If we don't find acquisitions we'll do more share buy-backs. If we do some more add-ons, we won't do share buy-backs," said Mr Hutchings, who spent £88m on buy-backs last year.

But the purchase trail is the favoured one for the company, which produces everything from Hovis bread to windscreen wipers. Last year it bought five major businesses but it also sold 15 smaller ones. Mr Hutchings agreed the

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MAIN MOVERS											
RISES						FALLS					
Stock	Price	Chg	Td	P/E	Code	Stock	Price	Chg	Td	P/E	Code
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES	-1.832%					ENGINEERING	0.519%				
554 822 British Airways	265.22	1.84	44.145	1980		151 71 Aeronautics	198.00	0.51	112.345		
466 279 British Airways	265.19	1.84	44.145	1980		151 561 Aeronautics	198.00	0.51	112.345		
55 13 British Gas	16.10	-0.47	402.05	138		151 562 British Gas	195.20	2.23	192.105		
772 746 British Gas	17.12	-0.49	2.23	563.2		151 563 British Gas	195.20	2.23	192.105		
376 286 British Gas	17.02	-0.49	2.23	563.2		151 564 British Gas	195.20	2.23	192.105		
100 85 British Gas	17.02	-0.49	2.23	563.2		151 244 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
290 157 Macroecon	181.42	0.85	54	158		151 245 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
BANKS	-0.111%					151 246 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1338 718 Abbey Nat	182.78	0.26	36.154	2191		151 247 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
904 747 ABN Amro	269.50	-0.21	221			151 248 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1001 596 ABN Amro	269.12	-0.21	221			151 249 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1234 536 Alcatel	12.02	-0.16	216			151 250 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
809 501 Alcatel	12.02	-0.16	216			151 251 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
987 577 Alcatel	17.44	-0.23	2.23	563.2		151 252 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
228 228 Alcatel (Paris)	17.44	-0.23	2.23	563.2		151 253 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
635 155 Alcatel	17.44	-0.23	2.23	563.2		151 254 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 255 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
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250 249 Alcatel US	111.19	0.24	3.854	1934		151 257 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1131 581 Alcatel US	101.22	-0.23	2.23	563.2		151 258 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1483 233 Standard	70.93	-0.24	3.14	114		151 259 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
249 249 Standard	70.93	-0.24	3.14	114		151 260 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
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1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 279 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 280 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 281 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
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1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 284 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 285 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 286 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 287 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 288 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 289 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 290 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
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1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 296 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 297 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 298 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
1118 622 Alcatel US	62.50	-0.21	213			151 299 First Tech	304.00	1.02	12.310	213	
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Wary investors turned on by telecoms

TELECOMS provided the stock market buzz, helping Footsie to swing from a 57.3-point fall to a 1.9-point gain to 599.3 at the close.

The economic environment offers little incentive for investment action and there is a tendency for players to sit on the sidelines.

But throughout the session telecoms, mostly the second-liners, were on another roll, and it was only when New York made a firm opening that the rest of the market joined the advance.

BT was the telecoms giant which led the way, surging 19.5p to 791p, a peak on continuing talk of corporate action and suggestions that it intends to return £3bn to shareholders after it cashes in its stake in MCI, the US group where it was out bid.

ScottishPower advanced 13p to 554p, rising on its telecoms rather than electricity operations. Panmure Gordon put out a buy signal with analyst, Philip Hollobone, describing the generator's telecoms side as "a version of Energen, plus a lot more". He set a 650p target.

National Grid floated a minority stake in Energen in December; the

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN

shares have risen from 254p to 1,122.5p.

The deal between Racal Electronics, planning to float its telecoms arm, and Colt Telecom helped the latest round of excitement, underlining the continuing consolidation in the industry.

Racal has signed an agreement with Colt which provides more connections in London. The shares jumped 29p to 400p, while Colt strengthened its claims for a Footsie place with a 16.5p gain to 2,885p.

General Cable, which has agreed a takeover by rival Telewest

Communications, jumped 16p to 281.5p, reflecting the strength of TC up 13.5p to 178p. With changes likely on the TC share register following the bid for one of its major shareholders, there are suspicions that there could be late developments in the takeover.

JWE Telecom jumped 57p to 244.5p and European Telecom improved 36.5p to 392.5p. ET's progress was achieved despite the sale of 1.4 million shares at 351p by chairman, Warren Hardy. He still has 45.8 per cent. JWE arrived on the market two months ago - the shares have moved from 155p.

Cable & Wireless Communications

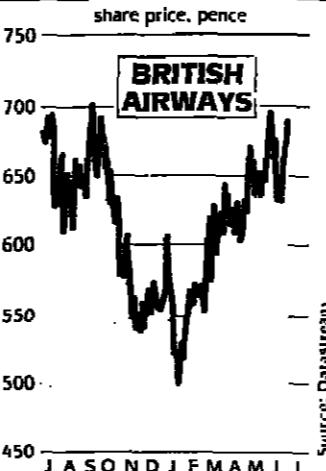
was one to ease back, falling 2p to 621.5p. An investment dinner hosted by Henderson Crosthwaite, took place at London's Savoy Hotel last night. CWC has paid £13m for 50.1 per cent of Two-Way Television. Ladbroke, up 3.5p to 322.5p, remains a shareholder in the interactive TV business.

British Airways flew up 19p to 685p ahead of the EU decision on its alliance with American Airlines.

Although the EU's terms may not

be acceptable to BA, there is a feel-

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Source: Datastream

blue-chip leader board with a 9.5p gain to 139p. Taking advantage of the weak SA rand, Billiton is buying the outstanding shares in two coal mines. The move had been expected with a slump in the price of coal. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson is thought still to have shares on its book.

Renam, the packaging and paper group, rose 6.5p to 270.5p; a planned £250m share buyback outweighed a cautious trading statement. Some wonder whether the buyback reflects fear that a predator may strike. Renam earlier seemed reluctant to return cash to shareholders.

Kenwood Appliances, the kitchen equipment group, was whisked 11p higher to 130p. Suspected bidder Pifco, perhaps significantly, gave ground.

Hillsdown, where Unigate was ready to bid 217p, firm 5p to 173.5p. It plans a three-way demerger but there are worries about another strike. SlayePharma bounced 6.5p to 73p; it is making US presentations ahead of its ADR listing.

SEAG VOLUME: 688.3m
SEAG TRADES: 59,679
GILTS: n/a

modest gain extended the winning streak to four sessions; the mid cap index also rose for the fourth consecutive session. But the small cap was off, down 5.9 at 2,598s.

Ascol, the industrial group, held

at 28p with Albert E Sharp saying

it had sold a special shareholders

meeting.

Ben Raven, chief executive, and Oliver Cooke, finance director, quit last month. They were largely responsible for developing the company. Card Clear shares rose 3.5p to 64.5p; they have been as high as 87.5p.

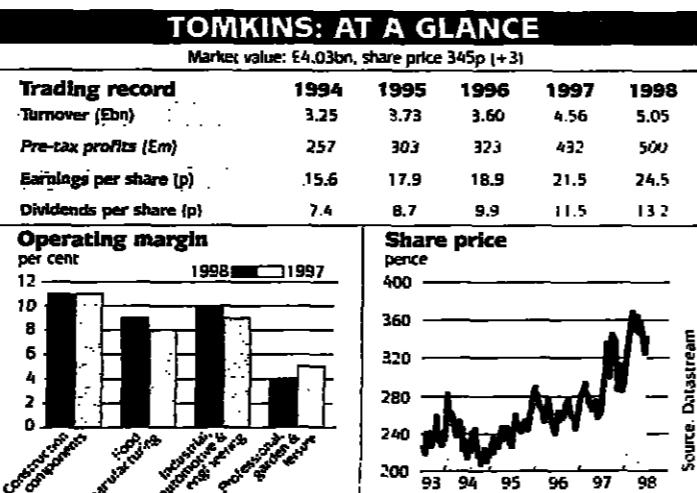
Mr Brady says the departure of Messrs Raven and Cooke "devalued" the company.

WIGGINS, the property group, held at 15p ahead of its ADR listing which will be heralded by US investment presentations. The group is also on the expansion trail and is raising finance by issuing convertible unsecured loan stock. Just how big a war chest it intends to create is not known.

Tomkins needs to spend some money

INVESTMENT

EDITED BY NIGEL COPE



yesterday as the market digested the company's trading update.

While Diageo said trading was in line with expectations and the integration of head offices and operations was running to schedule, there were some disappointments. One was a change to tax payments caused by US tax settlements that will affect cash flow by around £300m this year and next. Another was the continued exchange rate hit, which will dent profits by £55m in the six months to June and a further £85m in the year to June 1999.

But in spite of the dip in Diageo shares yesterday many commentators appear supportive. New disposal opportunities continue to appear and yesterday saw the for-sale sign hoisted over some of the Pillsbury second-tier brands including Underwood and Pet evaporated milk.

Analysts foresee a steady stream of other disposals including more of Pillsbury's lesser businesses and underperforming spirits brands like Metaxa and some rum brands.

In drinks, Guinness continues to perform well with volumes up and a strong performance in North America. But the Far East is clearly a problem. Markets in Indonesia and Singapore are particularly weak while volumes in Malaysia are in line with the previous year. Prices in local markets are being adjusted accordingly.

On Nikko's current year forecast of £1.96bn, the shares trade on a forward multiple of 20. That looks about right for a well-managed company trading in difficult markets.

Diageo runs into a few snags

AFTER THEIR spring surge, shares in Diageo, the spirits giant, have been suffering from a bit of a hangover. Stock in the newly formed Guinness and Grand Metropolitan combine fell a further 14p to 712p.

Rexam gives good value

IN PURELY practical terms, Rexam's decision to hand back £250m to its shareholders is a halfway house. Although it represents a move away from the packaging and printing group's determination to seek out acquisitions, it stops short of loading the company up with vast amounts of debt.

As a signal of its love of shareholder value, however, Rexam's performance could hardly be bettered. The company denies that it was pressured into the move, arguing that acquisition targets have simply become too expensive. But reports that financiers are putting together a £1.5bn break-up bid for the group no doubt helped to concentrate management's mind on reviving Rexam's flagging shares, which have halved against the market in the past two years.

Given that the cash distribution is worth 45p per ordinary Rexam share - £20m will go to preference shareholders - the market's reaction in pushing up the shares 6.5p to 270.5p yesterday looked rather mean.

However, trading is still tough in Rexam's core businesses and Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the stockbroker, forecasts flat pre-tax profits of £184m this year and next. But there is value in Rexam and if the management don't release it there is always the chance that a bidder will. On a forward p/e ratio of less than 10, good value.

Royal & Sun sale

ROYAL & SunAlliance has agreed to sell Professional Services, the property survey and valuation business of its estate agents Royal & SunAlliance Property Services, to Countrywide Surveyors, part of Hambro Countrywide, for £6m.

The business is also drafting in some of its existing troops from New York to London; John Hervey will head up global oils. Cary Wasden will cover global power. Jim Collins will do vehicle parts and Jennifer Moran will cover emerging markets strategy.

All of which will gladden the heart of Hector Sants, the former Royal & SunAlliance chairman.

Lighting unit sold

BRITAX INTERNATIONAL is to sell its 50 per cent interest in its original equipment lighting business Britax Vega Ltd (BVL) to its joint venture partner, Koito Manufacturing of Japan.

IN BRIEF

Beales Hunter bid succeeds

STADIUM, which makes plastic mouldings and electronic assemblies, claimed acceptances from over 53 per cent of shareholders for its cash offer of 110p a share for Beales Hunter, the industrial refrigeration group. The offer values Beales Hunter at £11.7m.

Interactive CWC

CABLE & WIRELESS Communications has announced the purchase of a £13m majority stake in an interactive TV company backed by Ladbroke Group. The 50.1 per cent stake in Two Way TV will allow CWC to offer customers interactive games with the launch of its 200 channel digital television service.

Tool hire deal

HEWDEN-STUART has acquired the entire issued share capital of Salmon and Pocock, which trades as Handihire, for £963,000 cash. In the year to 30 September 1997, Salmon and Pocock had adjusted net assets of £210,000. Hewden-Stuart said the tool hire business has branches in Plymouth, Paignton and Torquay.

Vimto move

JN NICHOLS (Vimto) said it is to spend £12.5m combining its Vimto soft drinks operations at a new site near Wigton. The move will lead to the closure of plants at Wythenshawe, Southampton and Haydock. The new site will consist of new production, warehousing and office facilities and is scheduled for completion in spring 1999.

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MILLS leaves Action to be his own boss

PEOPLE AND BUSINESS

BY JOHN WILLCOCK



DAVID MILLS has resigned as chief executive and director of Action Computer Supplies Holdings, just nine months after joining the catalogue components distributor from ICL. Mr Mills will trouser a six-month payoff worth about £15,000 for his troubles. He's leaving Action, based in Wembley, north London, to launch his own start-up.

Action has appointed George Laplante as group managing director to plug the gap. Mr Laplante is already Action's development and IT director, and has previously acted as finance director. Day-to-day management will stay with Duncan Wilkes, Action's chief operating officer.

Henry Lewis, Action's chairman, said of Mr Mills's departure: "It's a question of square pegs in round holes. David's obviously got a taste of the entrepreneurial life, and good luck to him."

WATCH OUT here comes Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette. The Wall Street investment bank has trumpeted its intentions to expand in London and take on the other "bulge bracket" behemoths on equal terms. To that end, yesterday it announced a clutch of high-profile hires on the equity research side.

The DLJ recruits include Charles Donald and Matthew Weston from Deutsche Morgan Grenfell, to cover the European Transport sector; Ian Shackleton, formerly head of research at HSBC, to cover the European drinks market; and Sonia Falaschi, the well-known media analyst at UBS, to cover the same sector for DLJ.

Charles Gregson, executive director of United and chairman of the broking companies, said Mr Hill would be replacing Gerry Wilton, who is giving up his executive role after 26 years.

Mr Gregson said: "I have worked with Gerry for the last 16 years and seen at first hand the great contribution he has made to the development of the London businesses."

SPRING RAM, the building materials company, said yesterday that its finance director, Martin Towers, has resigned "in order to pursue his career development elsewhere".

Andrew Wilson, formerly finance director of Magnet, the kitchens retailer, will join the board as group finance director on 3 August.

UBS has bought a 29 per cent stake in the Basic Group, a sportswear manufacturer which makes the Kappa range of clothes, considered extremely fashionable with night-clubbers in the early 1980s, I am told.

The Swiss gnomes have invested 45 billion lire (£18m) in Basic, which plans to float on the Italian Stock Exchange within the next two years.

Other Basic shareholders include Marco Boglione, the chairman and chief executive officer of Basic with 34 per cent, and Alessandro Benetton of the Benetton empire with 34 per cent.

LIFFE FINANCIAL FUTURES

Settlement: 5990.30

High: 6000.00

Low: 5980.00

Volume: 10,000

Open Interest: 15,000

Contract: Long/Short

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SPORT

British Grand Prix: McLaren's flying Finn has the machinery and the maturity to extend championship advantage

Hakkinen finds the right formula

By DERICK ALLSOP

THEY SAID he was dim, too full of himself, had no sense of humour and lacked the authority of a world champion. He may be only half-way to accomplishing that ultimate objective, but already he has confounded his detractors on the other counts.

Mika Hakkinen has emerged from the whispers and sniggers to be acknowledged as a credible and increasingly respected Formula One title contender. Victory for the Finn in the British Grand Prix on Sunday would almost certainly eliminate from the contest one of his two rivals - his McLaren-Mercedes teammate David Coulthard.

That would leave him with the small matter of contending with Ferrari's Michael Schumacher, but the eclipse of Coulthard - bright, personable, perfectly formed championship material - would represent perhaps a defining psychological landmark in Hakkinen's career.

He is conscious of his dour and clumsy public image. "When you see me answering questions I look serious because I am concentrating and thinking what I am saying, in a foreign language," he said. "In private life I am relaxed. That is different and I can be different."

He is aware, too, that many inside Formula One consider him too cocky by half during his early days at McLaren. A life-threatening accident at the end of the 1995 season gave him a new perspective on himself and the world he still belonged to.

"There is a danger of being big-headed in my situation," he said. "You just have to listen to the people you work with and keep your feet on the ground very heavily."

At McLaren, Hakkinen has found comfort, advice and maturity, as well as Formula One's best car. It may surprise some to hear he has also discovered fertile ground for fun at a famously orderly, impeccably turned out and businesslike team.

Now, at the age of 29, Hakkinen is equipped to cope with the verbal and mental jousting that accompanies grand prix racing.

In response to Eddie Irvine's pronouncement that McLaren have blown their championship hopes and will be destroyed by their teammate, Schumacher, at Silverstone, Hakkinen permits a dismissive smile to ripple across his face.

"Eddie's comments are always funny," he said. "It makes him happy but he's fourth in the championship and should keep his mouth shut. You don't worry about words. They give you a good laugh, but what people say can't hurt you."

Then, with another mischievous grin, he added: "It worked on Damon [Hill] a couple of times."

Hakkinen and the McLaren camp are well prepared for any mind games Schumacher and his cohorts care to play and do not intend to be undermined the way Hill was in the 1994 and 1995 seasons.

"I have been around in racing for



McLaren's Mika Hakkinen: 'It does not feel strange. All the time I have been racing, I have been preparing for this - to be in a leading position. It's what I have been waiting for'

Allsport

many years and have a huge experience," Hakkinen said. "I don't think I will crack and I'll be surprised if Ferrari get the better of us. The pressure is always going to be there and Michael is like this. But when I am on the racetrack I really don't feel Schumacher's psychological or [else] all these games will affect me because that shows a weakness."

Nerve and self-control will be crucial to Hakkinen's cause as he embarks on the second half of the season, leading Schumacher by six points and Coulthard by 20. "On a racetrack you can lose your temper in certain situations, but it happens rarely to me. I try to stay calm. Racing is about controlling your emotions. If you get excited and negative you start making mistakes."

For a man who won his first

grand prix as recently as the final race of last season, Hakkinen is remarkably at ease with the prospect of winning the championship.

"It's great to feel like this and be like this, but to be honest I have been expecting it since I came into Formula One, in 1991," he said.

"It has taken a long time and it does not feel strange. All the time I have been racing I have been preparing for this, to be in a leading position. It is what I have been waiting for."

Let anyone should suspect a hint of arrogance here, he emphasises he takes nothing for granted and expects nothing less than a fight to the finish on two fronts.

"It is down to three of us," he said, thereby discounting any possible challenge from Irvine. "It is going to be difficult. I just wish I had more points in the lead, but I can't expect

anything. I have to work for my target of the world championship and I'm going to work even harder."

"Of course David has still got a chance. He is a very quick driver, but he has to beat me first. He has had some bad luck, but will come back strong. It's logical."

"I rate Michael and David the same," he said, diplomatically. "I'm not fighting against my teammate in an aggressive way. I try to make him an ally, a friend, rather than a driver who is competing with me."

There is a lingering suspicion that McLaren favour Hakkinen for the driver's title and that Coulthard may eventually have to play a supporting role to ensure his teammate fends off the threat of Schumacher.

"It's not necessary to make David do that," Hakkinen insisted. "He

deserves the chance to stay in contention. If he's saving my bum it's not right."

"If we get the McLaren working to the maximum it will be enough, but I wish it would be that simple. We had the early domination, but experience tells you people will catch up. It's logical."

"All we can do is concentrate on our work, that is the main thing. There's no point in worrying about what the others are doing."

"We are working to keep improving and I know we are going to get faster, but nothing is done in one night. You have to wait. At the moment we are leading and we have been very strong in testing at Silverstone."

"There are still many races to go and I am extremely confident my team and our partners will give their maximum."

HAKKINEN'S RACE TO BE CHAMPION

AUSTRALIAN GP	SPANISH GP
1st	10pt
Started from pole, led until lengthy pit stop. McLaren team-mate Coulthard honoured pre-race agreement and let Hakkinen past to claim victory.	As in Brazil, Hakkinen controlled race from the start. His only problem was the occasional back marker.
MONACO GP	10pt
1st	
Hakkinen negotiated the streets of Monaco to record his fourth win of the season, despite making contact with one of the crash barriers.	
BRAZILIAN GP	10pt
1st	
Started from pole and led from start to finish. Hakkinen hardly challenged throughout race.	
CANADIAN GP	10pt
2nd	
Started from second on the grid, but soon found himself behind Coulthard and Schumacher. However, he could not catch the German in the latter stages of the race.	
SAN MARINO GP	4pt
3rd	
Did not finish	0pt
Forced to retire on the 17th lap because of gear failure when in second place behind Coulthard.	

Pioneers who cycled into Irish sporting legend

Robin Nicholl recalls the local heroes who will be fondly remembered when the Tour de France starts in Dublin on Saturday

Stabilinski led their co-leaders to one side of the course, and winked at Elliott, who was alone on the far side. That was the signal for the Dubliner to attack to win at Roubaix. It gave Elliott his greatest success as he pulled on the yellow jersey but Stabilinski strained their relationship two years later.

Elliott was leading the Paris-Luxembourg on the final day when Stabilinski, godfather to Elliott's son Pascal, upstaged him. The Frenchman worked with a breakaway group to wipe out Elliott's lead, and won the race. The Irishman finished in tears.

In 1959 he nursed an ailing Brian Robinson for seven hours of a Tour stage, but they finished outside the time limit. The Yorkshireman was reinstated because of a now-defunct rule that anyone in the first 10 overall could not be eliminated.

Not content with one Irishman, Anquetil's team also drafted in Ian Moore, but his 1961 Tour debut lasted only three days, and his professional career three years before he returned to live in England.

Ireland had to wait 20 more years for their next yellow jersey. So he attacked to take the

leader's pink jersey from Visentini, split his Carrera team's loyalties, and suffered the blows, insults, and threats of roadside spectators.

To crown a royal year, he won the world road race title at the Austrian town of Villach. Only the legendary Eddy Merckx had achieved the Tour, the Giro, and a world championship in the same year. Roche was on hallowed ground.

It was a glorious era for Ireland. Sean Kelly had four years as the winner of the Tour's green jersey for consistent placings. He also won five stages, the 1988 Vuelta a Espana, two world championship bronze medals, and a string of classics.

Roche's career had traced that of Elliott as he took up an apprenticeship with a Parisian club, AC Boulogne-Billancourt, the accepted stepping stone to the professional ranks.

Elliott made it by winning five amateur classics in his year with ACBB. Roche's key to the paid ranks was victory in the amateur Paris to Roubaix, a race fought out on cobbled tracks.

Kelly needed persuading, and only when a persistent manager arrived on the doorstep of his father's farm did Kelly sign a contract.

Kelly thought himself too young at 19 to become a professional. "I signed just to stop all the nagging," he once said. That was 22 years after Elliott made his mark.

Elliott was never to share those magic moments with Kelly and Roche. He died of gunshot wounds in 1971, a month short of his 37th birthday.

Martin Earley emerged during the Kelly-Roche era to ride eight Tours. He won a Tour stage at Pau where, six years earlier, Kelly had worn yellow.

Paul Kimmage ended his third Tour in 1989 with retirement but stayed long enough to celebrate Earley's win. Two years later

Roche's younger brother, Laurence, completed his only Tour.

Kimmage made his mark later with a book exposing the seedy world of drug usage, and became a sports journalist. Laurence now works as a projects officer in manufacturing. Earley is a sports physiotherapist. Kelly is a marketing executive for a cycle components

firm, and Roche mixes his promotional work with commentating for Eurosport.

Five years have passed since

they retired, but the influence of Kelly and Roche was sufficient to sway the Tour organisers into starting in Dublin.

In cheering the Tour through Ireland, thousands will pay their homage to the pioneering Elliott, and the Tour will honour his memory with a flower-laying ceremony at his grave on Sunday.

That day's racing will start

in Dundrum, the birthplace of Roche, and the third and final day in Ireland will take the Tour de France through Carrick-on-Suir, Kelly's home town, passing Sean Kelly Square on its way to Cork.

The Tour is coming home. Will it inspire a new Kelly or Roche?

Boardman's recovery problem

By ROBIN NICHOLL

CHRIS BOARDMAN is doubtful about his Tour de France prospects after visiting a specialist yesterday, five days before the big race opens in Dublin. "I am pursuing health problems. There isn't a quick fix. It will take a few months," he said, but declined to disclose the specialist's findings. "I will go to the Tour, but I am not expecting a great deal."

Boardman has been concerned about a slump in his ability to recover, a crucial factor for most sportsmen, especially those about to tackle 3,650 kilometres, including climbs in the Pyrenees and the Alps.

Since his remarkable debut in 1994, when he won the opening time trial at a Tour record speed of 55.152kph to take the yellow jersey, the Tour has been his main objective, and a bogey.

A year later he crashed out on the first day with a fractured ankle and wrist. He completed the 1996 Tour, and last year was back in the yellow jersey after winning the first-day time trial in Rouen. Then after 13 days he pulled out after trying to compete with two vertebral discs displaced by a crash in mountain mist.

Boardman's hopes had been heightened by his time trial successes in pre-Tour build-up races, the Dauphine Libérale stage race in France and the Tour of Catalonia, which he later quit. He was a non-starter for his final race, the Route du Sud, because of a gastric complaint.



Sean Kelly (left) won the Tour's green jersey four times while Stephen Roche won the yellow jersey in 1987



Infophoto

Tennis: Sampras provides the continuity with fifth title as new era looms on the grass courts of Wimbledon

Novotna feasts after her years of famine

BY JOHN ROBERTS

LOOKING as elegant as her tennis, Jana Novotna affected an air of scepticism. "Every year since I first came to Wimbledon," she said. "I heard a rumour that on the final Sunday there was a dinner for the champions. I did not believe it. And now that I am actually here, I still cannot believe it."

Novotna had swallowed a fair amount of the evidence. On an occasion when even the most disciplined players renege on diets, the Savoy tempted the palate with Le Saumon d'Ecosse Flûté, La Soufflé au Fromage, Les Noisettes d'Agneau à l'Estragon, Les Pommes Parisiennes, Le Rendez-vous à Fruits d'Eté Sorbet au Chambagne Rose.

While perhaps not worth a visit of 13 years, the food not to mention the Chardonnay and the Château Roulard, and most especially the ambience gladdened Novotna's eye. "I prepared a speech on the way here," she said, "but I have had a few glasses of wine and I cannot remember it." She remembered perfectly well, and served it without a fault.

Pete Sampras may have been one of the people who circulated the rumour about the dinner. He was in attendance as an honoured guest for the fifth time in six years, having taken out a lease on the Centre Court ("my practice court," as he calls it).

"As a kid when I saw [Björn] Borg's five it was a little overwhelming to think about it," he said. "I never thought that I would be in a position to tie it. When I was playing out there today I said to myself, 'Hey, you're doing OK'."

Although many people were hoping that Goran Ivanisevic would win the men's title after losing in two finals, and that the 26-year-old Croat would be sitting on the top table on Sunday, breaking bread with Novotna, there is something reassuring about the reign of Sampras. Sampras has seen champions

feasts may lie ahead of her. In 1996, Steffi Graf celebrated her seventh Wimbledon title, after which injuries threatened premature retirement.

It was good to see Graf return this year at 29, even though she lacked sufficient match fitness to do herself justice. In the circumstances, Natasha Zvereva took the opportunity to end a sequence of 17 defeats by the great German, winning their third-round match.

Although Graf will endeavour to play again next year, it is possible that the 29-year-old Novotna's victory will be the last hurrah for the older generation until the current crop of teenagers find themselves discussing how fast the years slip by.

Novotna, who virtually beat herself when she met Graf in the 1993 final, gave Hingis more than a hint of her capabilities while losing to the Swiss prodigy after taking the opening set of last year's final. In the later stages of her triumph over the past fortnight, Novotna gave a grass-court lesson to the 18-year-old Venus Williams, the older of the two impressive American sisters, and then put Hingis in her place in the semi-finals.

All of the above took place while the "Voice of Wimbledon", Chris Gorringe, the All England Club's chief executive, was taking a few deep breaths between broadcasting somorous bulletins concerning the

weather. Eddie Seaward, the head groundsman, ensured that the courts did not become a rain forest, and Alan Mills, the referee, shuffled the playing schedule with customary dexterity. In the unlikely event of a retractable roof on the Centre Court or Court No 1, Mills would have the tournament completed by Wednesday on the opening week.

A spectacular rainbow was one of the highlights of the middle Saturday. Although Tim Henman was unable to reach the end of it, his performance in becoming the first Briton for 25 years to reach the last four of the men's singles was a source of enormous encouragement.

The 23-year-old from Oxford, in taking the first set of the tournament off Sampras, prepared the champion well for Sunday's five-set tussle with Ivanisevic.

Henman has taken home support to the heart of the men's championships for the past three years, and we have become accustomed to, though certainly not blasé about, an elevation of the national profile. The shock came when our leading lady, Sam Smith, defeated a former champion, Conchita Martínez, and landed in the last 16. The stock of the 25-year-old from Essex did not exactly plunge when Tauziat went on to the final after defeating her for the loss of only four games.

The notion that the tall, dark left-hander opposing Sampras in the final might have been Britain's Greg Rusedski was a non-starter, even though the fourth-seeded Rusedski did start the tournament after injuring his left ankle in a fall while competing at Queen's Club less than a fortnight earlier.

Unable to complete his first round match against the Australian Mark Draper, the 24-year-old Rusedski then found himself without a coach.

Tony Pickard, from Nottingham, resigned, saying that Rusedski was no longer prepared to listen to him.

It will be interesting to see who the man with the biggest serve and smile in the game turns to next. Rusedski, who plans to return to the courts at an ATP Tour event in Washington DC a week next Monday, faces the prospect of defending the ranking points he won as a finalist at last year's United States Open. It can be tough at the top.

Before leaving London to "chill out" prior to heading for the concrete courts of Los Angeles at the end of the month, Sampras was asked if he thought he could double his number of Wimbledon titles. "I'll take them one at a time," he said. The digestive system can only stand so much.



Jana Novotna finally enjoys her moment of triumph after losing in two finals

Robert Hallam



Jana Novotna and Pete Sampras at the Champions' Dinner on Sunday night

Alport

Southern hemisphere tour: England coach can expect hot reception when he returns from break to face inquest

Battling Woodward will need to box clever

BY CHRIS HEWITT
Rugby Correspondent

NO ONE can accuse Clive Woodward of failing to enter into the spirit of the moment. Not content with watching a grass-green and generally anonymous England squad fight losing battles against southern hemisphere opposition of the very highest class, the national coach decided to liven up his summer tour by provoking a few private pick-ups of his own.

John Hart and the New Zealand hierarchy were first on the hit list, closely followed by Australia's senior referee, Twickenham's G and T brigade, the South African Rugby Football Union, the management of one of Cape Town's many Holiday Inns and, if truth be told, more than a few of Woodward's fellow tour administrators.

Pew. It will be nothing short of miraculous if he has any strength left to face what is certain to be a fiery debriefing session at HQ. Woodward intends to spend the rest of this week at the football World Cup and there are many who believe he would do well to allow the Tour de France, an Alpine hiking holiday and a six-month break at a Franciscan monastery to his holiday schedule. Anything but return to south-west London and the wrath of the Rugby Football Union hierarchy.

English rugby has been contested more fiercely of the last three years, but not even the familiar grey-suited protagonists - Clive Brittle, Fran Cotton, Sir John Hall and the ilk - could have imagined the degree to which Woodward would up the ante during his five weeks down south.

If few of his predecessors would even have dreamed of telling the All Blacks where to get off in such forthright fashion, particularly after a record 60-point Test defeat, it is absolutely certain that none would have used their own plastic to underwrite a lock, stock and barrel

THE WINNERS: THE PLAYERS WHO ROSE IN THE SOUTH					
GRAHAM ROUNTREE	BEN CLARKE	TONY DIPROSE	MATT DAWSON	MATT PERRY	
Strangely anonymous on the Lions tour last year, a central figure this time round. Rountree retrieved his reputation from the back end of beyond with an authoritative contribution to England's front-row effort and a World Cup place is now his for the taking. Amazing what one Ian Jones stamp can do for a career.	You start to wonder how England ever left him out. Clarke bore the mark of the warrior on his forehead from the moment he left Heathrow and he fought his corner with energy, passion and pride. If England even consider going into the World Cup without him, southern hemisphere eyes will blink in disbelief.	On that awful Sunday after the Saturday before in Brisbane, Diprose looked all washed up with nowhere to go. Then came Rotorua and a personal display of such mind-boggling courage that the New Zealand Maoris were properly dropping respect come the final whistle. Who will say now that he doesn't have what it takes?	If you want to split hairs, you can question Dawson's tactical appreciation. Most observers will not bother: Dawson won the All Blacks with flashes of individual brilliance, tackled beyond the limits of normal endurance and stood tall as a leader both on and off the paddock. A big advance from a big game player.	Four years ago, another West Country full-back, Paul Hull of Bristol, stood firm against the Springboks as the rest of England crumbled around him, only to be blown out by the selectors with indecent haste. Perry will not suffer similarly. Great maturity plus a full range of skills make him very special indeed.	

THE LOSERS: THE ONES LEFT DOWN AND OUT DOWN UNDER					
ALEX KING	STEVE RAVENSCROFT	TIM STIMPSON	DANNY GREWCOCK	THE TOUR ORGANISER	
It is always depressing to watch a gifted individual consumed by self-doubt and there is now no guarantee that the Wasps stand-off will ever bring his subtlety to bear on the test stage. King's obvious lack of match fitness left him open to the ravages of New Zealand's Polynesian and Maori contingents and the results were grisly.	Strong and reliable in the club environment, five yards short of a gallop at the top level. Ravenscroft was blown away by Tim Horan in Brisbane, not through any lack of application or technique but through a lack of genuine gas. It is easier to imagine Greenwood, Guscott or Catt reaching for the sleeping tablets.	Probably the most talked-about player of the tour, for all the wrong reasons. Those who believe Stimpson has merely lost his bearings are under a fierce attack from those who insist he never had any to lose. Stimpson will need some enormous early-season performances at Leicester to reassess his credentials.	Anton Oliver barely felt the impact of Grewcock's boot at that fateful scrum in Dunedin, but the Saracen giant is certainly feeling the consequences. The five-week ban will not worry the lock - he probably needed a break - but the performances of Rob Fidler and Dave Sims should be of the utmost concern. Silly boy.	Thank you so much, whoever you are. No one is rushing to admit responsibility for an itinerary that would have persuaded Marco Polo to surrender his passport, but 30-odd players will not rest until they find the guilty man. England should steer clear of Captain Oates Tours back to Leicester to reassess his credentials.	

Back or Richard Hill on the open-side flank. Fidler proved himself a better footballer than Garath Archer if not a harder nut, while Beim may just have what it takes to solve England's chronic wing problem. Matt Dawson also did himself a power of good, both as a scrum-half and a potential captain. Woodward will still be drawn towards Lawrence Dallaglio's proven leadership skills when England's first team, as opposed to their development side, return to the gallops in the autumn, but Dawson's performances have propelled the absent Wasp clean out of whatever comfort zone he has been inhabiting since the middle of May. "By not touring, Lawrence gave away the No 6 shirt and the captaincy and it just so happens that the two stars of the tour, Clarke and Dawson, were No 6 and captain respectively," said the coach pointedly.

The midfield cupboard remains distinctly Mother Hubbardish in appearance, however. Josh Lewsey does not yet possess the kicking game to hold down the stand-off berth and, while Jonny Wilkinson can kick like a mule, his confidence levels must be positively subterranean after Brisbane. In the centre, the non-travelling fixtures are still in place. Will Greenwood on the inside and Jeremy Guscott, if he can be bothered, on the outside. The new boys were all given a run but none of them moved an inch.

Much has been written about the crass stupidity of inflicting so arduous a tour on so callow a party and every word of it rings true. Contracts may have been signed and television deals may now be deemed more sacrosanct than the four Gospels, but on no account should England ever again contemplate such a programme. According to Woodward, they will not; at least, not while he is in the box seat. It is one private battle that he must not be allowed to lose.

move to the plusher hotel on the African continent.

The last month and a bit have been bizarre in the extreme. Here was the most bone-headed tour itinerary, the most ludicrously over-stuffed support squad, the least experienced team and the most outspoken coach in the history of the English game, all thrown together in the same pot. It is only a mild exaggeration to suggest that Richard Cockerill, Leicester's rent-an-incident hooker, emerged from the tour as a voice of common sense. At least he had a good time.

Certainly, the RFU will not be remotely amused by the fact that the £1.25m they splashed out on the trip - the figure does not include the £10,000 or so lavished on Woodward's now notorious hotel upgrade in Cape Town - bought them little or nothing in the way of solace. Their first full-time salaried coach remains intensely hostile to the general structure and modus operandi of the governing body, objects

strongly to the terms of the Mayfair Agreement hammered out between the union and its senior clubs and stands unashamedly four-square behind Cotton and his radical plans for a root and branch overhaul of the red rose game.

These are all matters of opinion and Woodward's views are every bit as legitimate as the next man's; after all, he has the job of planning next year's World Cup campaign. But while English rugby remains in so volatile a state, he should tread carefully, especially now that John Mitchell has proved himself so central to the national cause. While the chief coach was lobbing verbal hand grenades from the rooftops, his assistant was downstairs in the basement with a whip in his hand and sweat on his brow. Mitchell had a very good tour and if Woodward has any enemies at Twickenham, they will not have been slow to notice the work behind the scenes put in by his right-hand man.

Worryingly for England, the play-

ers who got themselves noticed were those about whom we already knew more than enough; while the Graham Rountrees and Ben Clarke's resurrected their Test careers, the young pretenders did little more than pretend.

There were honourable exceptions among the rookie regiment - notably Phil Vickery, Pat Sanderson, Rob Fidler and Tom Beim. Vickery is now a cast-iron fixture at tight-head and Sanderson a handy hunk of super-fit cover for either Neil

'Social' drug users tarnish sport's image

RONNIE O'SULLIVAN yesterday escaped a ban for substance abuse at the Benson & Hedges Irish Masters last May.

The 22-year-old world No 3 feared he might be put out of the game for a period of time because he is already serving a two-year suspended sentence following an attack on a press officer at the 1996 World Championships.

But O'Sullivan, who attended yesterday's disciplinary committee meeting of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association in Bristol, has been punished by being stripped of the Masters title and its accompanying prize of £61,000. That money is now due to the runner-up, Ken Doherty, who is now regarded as the official winner. For O'Sullivan, however, the decision will have come as a relief.

O'Sullivan, who was accompanied by his manager, Ian Doyle, and solicitor, Henri Brandman, issued a brief statement: "Ronnie accepts the decision of the enquiry," Brandman said. "He has apologised for the use of cannabis which was an isolated occurrence some five days before the tournament in question."

"The committee accepted the submission made on Ronnie's behalf that he didn't take the substance for the purpose

Ronnie O'Sullivan's punishment for cannabis use reflects a problem for governing bodies. By Mike Rowbottom

of enhancing his performance in the event."

This is not the first high-profile drug case within the world of snooker.

Ten years ago the former world champion Cliff Thorburn was fined £10,000 after testing positive for cocaine, and Thorburn's Canadian colleague Kirk Stevens also fell foul of the authorities because of a cocaine habit.

Another Canadian, Bill Werbeniuk, found his top class career was effectively brought to a close when the WPBSA put block-busters on their banned list of substances. Werbeniuk said he required the drug, which has the effect of stabilising the pulse, because he had a medical condition.

O'Sullivan's case has been preceded by two similar incidents in the last year within the sport. Yorkshireman Paul Hunter, the Welsh Open winner, was fined £4,550 and docked 1,140 rankings points after testing positive for cannabis at the 1997 Grand Prix event in Bournemouth. Steve Emerod, of Lancashire, also tested pos-

itive for cannabis at last year's B&H Championships, incurring an £800 fine.

Although it was acknowledged that O'Sullivan's transgression was not intended to gain unfair advantage over his opponents, one of the factors which has clearly been of paramount importance to the committee is the image of the game. In a statement released after his positive test was confirmed, O'Sullivan described himself as "deeply ashamed". He went on to acknowledge his responsibility as a role model to youngsters and apologised to his fans, vowing to "make amends for his conduct by offering his time to local schools and youth groups to press home the message that youngsters should say 'no' to drugs."

The responsibilities referred to in O'Sullivan's apology were highlighted in a statement by the president of the International Olympic Committee, Juan-Antonio Samaranch, who declared that athletes should be an example for today's youth. But the growing number of cases in which sports have had



Ronnie O'Sullivan was relieved to escape without a ban after being found guilty of drug abuse Brian Jones

to deal with "social" drug use indicates that the youth of today are not entirely clear about which example they should be following.

At the Winter Olympics in February, Canada's Ross Rebagliato was stripped of his snowboarding gold medal after his urine sample showed traces

of cannabis, only to have the decision reversed because of a discrepancy between the IOC rules and those of snowboarding's guiding body, the International Ski Federation.

Cricket also experienced problems when Ed Giddins, of Sussex, tested positive for cannabis in August 1996. He was

banned until April this year.

Football adopted a similar stance in the case of Roger Stanislaus, the Leyton Orient defender who received a year's ban after taking cocaine. But a higher-profile cocaine user, Paul Merson, has maintained his career, and indeed recently played for England, after

undertaking a rehabilitation programme.

The National Rugby League in Australia have attempted to deal with widespread use of "social" drugs among its players by removing mandatory penalties for cannabis use. The onus is now on individual clubs to deal with erring players.

Unsettled McRae is target of new club

RUGBY LEAGUE

By DAVE HADFIELD

SHAUN MCRAE is the man Gateshead want as coach if they are awarded a Super League franchise for next season. The North-east outpost is the front runner for a place in the competition in 1999 and St Helens' refusal to talk to McRae about a new contract until the end of this month has left him amenable to an approach.

McRae is coming to the end of his current three-year deal at Saints, who won the inaugural Super League championship and the Challenge Cup twice under him. However, his position has looked increasingly untenable with the departure of David Howes as chief executive and the arrival of Eric Hughes as football operations manager.

The Rugby League is investigating an alleged altercation between Bradford's James Lowes and Leeds spectators after he was sent to the sin bin at Headingley on Friday night. Lowes and the Leeds stand-off, Tony Kemp, were both put out of the game for 10 minutes for fighting, but trouble flared again when the Bradford hooker took his place on the bench just feet from home supporters.

Objects were thrown in his direction and a policeman was called on to intervene when Lowes seemed to respond. Some reports claim that Lowes had been spat at, but the player has not confirmed that.

Peter Rose, a League spokesman, said: "We have called for reports from both clubs to find out what happened and prevent anymore incidents of this type in the future."

Lowes' team-mate, Graeme Bradley, has gone into print as referring to Shaun Edwards, who recently left the Bulls to rejoin the London Broncos, as "a bad apple" in his column in the Bradford evening paper. Bradley says that team spirit has returned since Edwards' departure.

New Zealand are refusing to play the scheduled mid-week games against England and Wales on their short tour this November. The Kiwis are due to play the extra matches in Gateshead and South Wales as well as the three Tests against Great Britain. But their coach, Frank Endacott, feels that after a long season and two Tests against Australia, "it would be too much to ask," said the League's chief executive, Neil Tunnicliffe.

England and Wales, already due to play each other this month, are now likely to meet again in November to fill the gap in their calendar.

Scott Naylor is out of England's team to play Wales at Widnes. The Salford centre damaged a shoulder during the match against Warrington on Sunday.

Carter extends Monty's misery

GOLF

By ANDY FARRELL

FOR COLIN Montgomerie, it must have been "Oh, no, not again." But David Carter was feeling something far different. "When I was on the buggy going back to the 18th, I just thought it was meant to be," he said. "After everything I had been through, almost losing my ball on the 16th and holing that putt on the last to get into the play-off, I thought it was meant to be."

Carter was right. The 26-year-old, born in South Africa but based at his father's driving range at Handley Wood in Chesterfield, won the Murphy's Irish Open at Drifters Glen at the first extra hole and extending Montgomerie's ever-worsening play-off record to one win in seven attempts.

The Scot, who had been trying to win the title for a third successive year, was in no mood to comment. In a calmer

moment, perhaps at the Standard Life Loch Lomond tournament this week, Monty would doubtless, in his inimitable style, say something along the lines of: "As I have said before - too many times before - I was not beaten over 72 holes."

Often Montgomerie has done well just to get into a play-off, and, apart from the satisfying time when he defeated Ernie Els on the South African's home patch at Sun City, has often been outdone by something spectacular from his opponent. Both were true of the 1995 US PGA at Riviera, when Montgomerie birdied the last three holes to go

MONTGOMERIE'S PLAY-OFF RECORD

1991 Volvo PGA Championship: Lost to birdie by Seve Ballesteros at first extra hole

1992 Volvo Masters: Lost to Sandy Lyle at first extra hole with a bogey

1994 US Open: Lost 18-hole play-off by four strokes with a 78 as Ernie Els went on to beat Loren Roberts at 20th extra hole

1995 Murphy's Irish Open: Conceded at the first extra hole to David Carter

SPORTING DIGEST

ATHLETICS INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR ATHLETIC FEDERATION CHAMPIONSHIPS (Budapest, Hun) Sunday's results: Men: 100m: 1 D Campbell (Eng) 10.33sec; 2 M Peart (Eng) 10.41; 3 D Peart (Eng) 10.55; 4 E White (Eng) 10.70; 200m: 1 Washington (US) 20.40sec; 2 M Heiter (Chi) 20.50; 3 D Peart (Eng) 20.59; 4 D Peart (Eng) 21.38; 400m: 1 I Thomas (Eng) 45.37sec; 2 T Mcleod (Bani) 45.65; 3 D Stoddart (Aus) 45.70; 4 D Peart (Eng) 45.71; 800m: 1 M Hulme (Eng) 1:59.10; 2 M Hulme (Eng) 1:59.25; 3 K Karanam (Eng) 1:59.30; 4 M Hulme (Eng) 1:59.35; 1500m: 1 D Peart (Eng) 3:57.14; 2 M Hulme (Eng) 3:57.16; 3 M Hulme (Eng) 3:57.17; 4 M Hulme (Eng) 3:57.18; 5000m: 1 M Hulme (Eng) 13:56.25; 2 M Hulme (Eng) 13:56.40; 3 M Hulme (Eng) 13:56.45; 4 M Hulme (Eng) 13:56.50; 10000m: 1 M Hulme (Eng) 30:54.25; 2 M Hulme (Eng) 30:54.30; 3 M Hulme (Eng) 30:54.35; 4 M Hulme (Eng) 30:54.40; 50km: 1 M Hulme (Eng) 1:59.30; 2 M Hulme (Eng) 1:59.35; 3 M Hulme (Eng) 1:59.40; 4 M Hulme (Eng) 1:59.45; 100km: 1 M Hulme (Eng) 1:59.40; 2 M Hulme (Eng) 1:59.45; 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Spirit Willing to conquer all

By SUE MONTGOMERY

ONE OF the beauties of the racing year is its seasonal rhythm, a factor best appreciated by those who are fortunate enough to be able to do the rounds of the feature meetings in person rather than on a TV screen. This is a sport with animals at its heart and so, necessarily, its pulse beats in time with nature.

The calendar now says mid-summer, which should mean easy tropical kit and steel bands for racegoers, horses with a deep, ultraviolet-induced glow to their coats, and man and beast alike finding relief in the dappled shade under the trees at the Newmarket July meeting. It should mean being able, on a walk down the open Heath away from the buzz of the grandstands, to absorb the sensory delights of the warmth of sun on the arms, the feel and balm of the centuries-old turf underfoot, and the fundamental drum of hoofbeats in the ears. The weather, however, may decree otherwise.

But rain or shine, today marks the start of the second half of the game. Yes, there is high-class competitive racing all week with many old favourites

due to appear. But the focus on the youngest generation of racehorses is beginning to sharpen; in July week the two-year-olds begin to bloom.

Two years ago the Cherry Hinton Stakes - which had in the previous decade thrown up numerous fillies who subsequently proved top class (Haray, Sayyadet, Diminuendo, Chimes Of Freedom, Forest Flower and Magic Of Life) was upgraded to become the first Group Two juvenile heat of the year and today's renewal has attracted a field of 10 young distaffers worthy of its status.

The one with the best public form is Pipalong, who beat all bar the flying Bint Alayi in the Queen Mary Stakes at Royal Ascot. This genuine, likeable daughter of Pip's Pride, trained in Yorkshire by Tim Easterby, raced that day as if this afternoon's step up to six furlongs would suit her well and thoroughly deserves to win a decent contest.

The form of Rose Of Mooncoin's debut win over today's course and distance on Derby evening has been franked by victories from her immediate victims Wannabe Grand and Spirit Willing, who re-appear.

NEWMARKET

HYPERION

2.05 Meneer 4.10 Petarga
2.35 Star Talent 4.45 Diamond White
3.05 PIPALONG (nap) 5.15 Mousehole
3.35 Sabadilla (nb)

GOING: Good to Firm. STALLS: Stand side. DRAW ADVANTAGE: None. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

■ Course is SW of town on A1304. Bus link from Cambridge and Newmarket stations.

ADMISSION: Club £22 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Grandstand & Paddock £11 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Club Box Office £10; Park Members £1; rest free.

LEADING TRAINERS: H. Cecil 23; C. H. Smith 23; G. Moore 23; C. H. H. Moore 13; D. T. Dutton 12 (17); R. Haddon 11 (16); D. Loder 10-67 (14%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: Pat Eddery 40-135 (19%); L. Dettori 36-180 (20%); K. Fallon 19-80 (23.5%); R. H. H. Moore 16 (16%); J. Reid 12-107 (15%).

FAVOURITES: 167-222 (35%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: 232 (Meneer, 4.10); Piranha (4.45).

2.05 STRUT & PARKER MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £7,000 added 2YO 7f Penalty Value £5,299

DATE: (Addish) E 1 August 9

GOING: Good to Firm. STALLS: Stand side. DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

■ Course is SW of town on A1304. Bus link from Cambridge and Newmarket stations.

ADMISSION: Club £22 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Grandstand & Paddock £11 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Club Box Office £10; Park Members £1; rest free.

LEADING TRAINERS: H. Cecil 23; C. H. Smith 23; G. Moore 23; C. H. H. Moore 13; D. T. Dutton 12 (17); R. Haddon 11 (16); D. Loder 10-67 (14%).

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FAVOURITES: 167-222 (35%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: 232 (Meneer, 4.10); Piranha (4.45).

FORM GUIDE

Date: February 1st. 1998. 2000-guineas Cadeaux Generoux col. the first test of a useful 2yo. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

Gold 1: Wannabe Grand. Grand Lodge first foal of a 5m winner from the family of Gilt Of Gold. Made 2000 guineas as a foal.

Learned Friend: College Chapel colt from a good family, 14-1, third in the bunched first won by Dalcross in a maiden (6f good) here 11 days ago. Solid improvement seen in last race, and is now a 2yo. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

Mouthdisorder: Late April foal. Made 2000-guineas Alzaco colt. Dam 1m2f winner who had already produced several winners, including 175f and 1m2f scorer Nijm Nijmeh. Nijmeh February 4, test. 70,000-guineas Kingmarrero colt, the first foal of a French 15f winner who is a half-sister to 1m2f scorer Nijmeh. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

Strut & Parker: 12 colt by Gatsby. Fire colt of a well-related French foal. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

Tootie: Cadeaux March 21 colt by Motte. Half-brother to several winners out of a useful 2yo 6f winner.

Waterfront: March 7 colt by Turta Island. Made 1,200,000 guineas as a yearling and dam 1m2f winner. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

Verdict: Given the immodesties of which of these newcomers (several of whom look interesting enough on paper) are fit and ready to do themselves justice, the value could be with LEARNED FRIEND. Richard Hannon's two-year-olds usually improve a good deal for their debuts and this one showed plenty of ability on his. Meneer is clearly a maverick to take seriously.

2.35 H & K COMMISSIONS HANDICAP (CLASS D) £10,000 added 1m Penalty Value £9,065

DATE: (Addish) E 1 August 9

GOING: Good to Firm. STALLS: Stand side. DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

■ Course is SW of town on A1304. Bus link from Cambridge and Newmarket stations.

ADMISSION: Club £22 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Grandstand & Paddock £11 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Club Box Office £10; Park Members £1; rest free.

LEADING TRAINERS: H. Cecil 23; C. H. Smith 23; G. Moore 23; C. H. H. Moore 13; D. T. Dutton 12 (17); R. Haddon 11 (16); D. Loder 10-67 (14%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: Pat Eddery 40-135 (19%); L. Dettori 36-180 (20%); K. Fallon 19-80 (23.5%); R. H. H. Moore 16 (16%); J. Reid 12-107 (15%).

FAVOURITES: 167-222 (35%).

BUNKERED FIRST TIME: 232 (Meneer, 4.10); Piranha (4.45).

FORM GUIDE

Date: February 1st. 1998. 2000-guineas Cadeaux Generoux col. the first test of a useful 2yo. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

Gold 1: Wannabe Grand. Grand Lodge first foal of a 5m winner from the family of Gilt Of Gold. Made 2000 guineas as a foal.

Learned Friend: College Chapel colt from a good family, 14-1, third in the bunched first won by Dalcross in a maiden (6f good) here 11 days ago. Solid improvement seen in last race, and is now a 2yo. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

Mouthdisorder: Late April foal. Made 2000-guineas Alzaco colt. Dam 1m2f winner who had already produced several winners, including 175f and 1m2f scorer Nijm Nijmeh. Nijmeh February 4, test. 70,000-guineas Kingmarrero colt, the first foal of a French 15f winner who is a half-sister to 1m2f scorer Nijmeh. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

Strut & Parker: 12 colt by Gatsby. Fire colt of a well-related French foal. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

Tootie: Cadeaux March 21 colt by Motte. Half-brother to several winners out of a useful 2yo 6f winner.

Waterfront: March 7 colt by Turta Island. Made 1,200,000 guineas as a yearling and dam 1m2f winner. ■ Hard-fought course with 1m in straight.

Verdict: Given the immodesties of which of these newcomers (several of whom look interesting enough on paper) are fit and ready to do themselves justice, the value could be with LEARNED FRIEND. Richard Hannon's two-year-olds usually improve a good deal for their debuts and this one showed plenty of ability on his. Meneer is clearly a maverick to take seriously.

3.05 CHARLES HEIDSIECK CHAMPAGNE CHERRY HINTON STAKES (CLASS D) £10,000 added 2YO 6f Penalty Value £22,850

DATE: (Addish) E 1 August 9

GOING: Good to Firm. STALLS: Stand side. DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

■ Course is SW of town on A1304. Bus link from Cambridge and Newmarket stations.

ADMISSION: Club £22 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Grandstand & Paddock £11 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Club Box Office £10; Park Members £1; rest free.

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3.35 PRINCESS OF WALES'S STAKES (Group 2) £10,000 added 1m 4f Penalty Value £21,400

DATE: (Addish) E 1 August 9

GOING: Good to Firm. STALLS: Stand side. DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

■ Course is SW of town on A1304. Bus link from Cambridge and Newmarket stations.

ADMISSION: Club £22 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Grandstand & Paddock £11 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Club Box Office £10; Park Members £1; rest free.

LEADING TRAINERS: H. Cecil 23; C. H. Smith 23; G. Moore 23; C. H. H. Moore 13; D. T. Dutton 12 (17); R. Haddon 11 (16); D. Loder 10-67 (14%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: Pat Eddery 40-135 (19%); L. Dettori 36-180 (20%); K. Fallon 19-80 (23.5%); R. H. H. Moore 16 (16%); J. Reid 12-107 (15%).

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4.05 PIPALONG (nap) 2YO 6f Penalty Value £11,000

DATE: (Addish) E 1 August 9

GOING: Good to Firm. STALLS: Stand side. DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.

■ Course is SW of town on A1304. Bus link from Cambridge and Newmarket stations.

ADMISSION: Club £22 (half-price 15-25-year-olds); Grandstand & Paddock £11 (half

Anger as Wilson joins Wednesday

SHEDFIELD WEDNESDAY yesterday appointed Danny Wilson as their manager but no sooner had his move to Hillsborough been sealed, and John Hendrie installed as Barnsley's manager in his place, than a row broke out between the clubs.

John Dennis, the Barnsley chairman, criticised the way Wednesday had lured Wilson away. "Let me make it absolutely clear from Barnsley's point of view that the events of the last few days were unwelcome, unsolicited and very disappointing," he said.

"We tried everything to get Danny to stay. It wasn't a money thing. Danny Wilson had a good relationship as a player with Sheffield Wednesday, and it was the only club he would have left Barnsley for."

"Wednesday contacted me in the middle of last week, and I told them to go away but I was honour-bound to tell Danny

about the approach and events took off."

Wilson claimed he was fulfilling a "once-in-a-lifetime" chance to manage the club he served as a player for three years between 1990 and 1993.

"These opportunities very rarely come around," Wilson said. "I hope the match is a good one. The decision to come to Sheffield Wednesday was easy - the difficulty was leaving Barnsley. That was the hardest part. I must stress that the transfer has been handled very, very professionally. I certainly wouldn't have come if the deal hadn't been done correctly."

The new Barnsley manager, Hendrie, said: "I had no inkling whatsoever. I talked it over with my family. I met the chairman on Sunday and we agreed in principle. I have got the total support of the players. I don't foresee any problems."

Liverpool go for West

BY ALAN NIXON

TARIBO WEST: Internazionale's Nigerian World Cup centre-half, could be heading for Liverpool in a £5m deal before the end of the week.

Liverpool's manager, Roy Evans, watched the powerful West, famed for his green-bearded hair, in the finals in France and was having talks with Inter yesterday about making him his major summer cash signing.

Evans had been interested in West but he made his move only when he heard that Everton's new manager, Walter Smith, who had wanted to sign West when he was in charge at Rangers, was hoping to take him to the blue side of Merseyside.

Liverpool were last night

trying to agree a compromise figure with Inter, whose initial asking price was £8m.

Liverpool have been keen to sign a tough centre-half and West fits the bill. Although he had a patchy World Cup for the exciting Nigerians, there are not many top-class defenders available and West did well in the demanding Italian Serie A last season.

His personal terms should not be a major problem for Liverpool, who pulled out of a move for France's Marcel Desailly because of his wage demands. Evans was also keen on Germany's Jürgen Kohler, but he did not shine at France 98 and his age, 32, was considered

too old by the Liverpool board. Graeme Souness, the coach of Benfica, has made an un-

expected approach to Oldham Athletic for Carl Sarrant, their England Under-21 left-back. Sarrant, who has rejected a new contract at Oldham, is due to fly to Lisbon this week for talks about a what would be a free transfer.

Some needs to replace Scott Minto, who is coming home to rejoin Charlton, and Sarrant is regarded as suitable as there is no fee involved and Benfica are short of money.

Sarrant, who has also attracted interest from Liverpool and Leicester City - has been unable to move domestically because Oldham are asking £1m for him. However, he can go abroad for nothing and the Second Division club are anxiously awaiting the result of his talks with Benfica.

United likely to tackle Poles

BY RUPERT METCALF

IF MANCHESTER United are to renew their relationship with the Champions' League next season, they must first survive a tricky August trip to either Poland or Azerbaijan.

Their failure to retain the

Premiership title last term means that the Old Trafford club must participate in the European Cup's second qualifying round. They will entertain either LKS Lodz from Poland or Kapaz Ganca, the champions of Azerbaijan, in Manchester on 12 August - four days before the

Premiership season starts - with the return leg on 26 August.

The Poles are United's most likely opponents. On their only previous trip to Lodz, they met Widzew Lodz, city rivals to LKS, in the first round of the 1980-81 Uefa Cup. The Poles drew the first leg in Manchester 1-1, with Sammy McIlroy scoring for United. The second leg was a goalless draw, which meant United were eliminated on away goals.

Celtic and Rangers, along

with Kilmarnock, must commence their European campaigns later this month. In the European Cup first qualifying round, they will meet Widzew Lodz, city rivals to LKS, in the first round of the 1980-81 Uefa Cup. The Poles drew the first leg in Manchester 1-1, with Sammy McIlroy scoring for United. The second leg was a goalless draw, which meant United were eliminated on away goals.

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First semi-final: Competition's only two candidates for greatness meet in Marseilles amid echoes of past battles

Fire and ice hold keys to victory

IT HAS been noted that, though blessed with moments of sublime individual brilliance by the likes of Bergkamp, Owen and Ortega, this World Cup still waits for greatness, either individual or collective, to emerge.

If it is a dozen years since an individual in Maradona, truly transcended this quadrennial jamboree, one has to go back much further to find a great team. Brazil, in 1970, may have been the last outstanding winners; the Dutch, four years later, and Brazil again, in 1982, the last glorious failures.

This has much to do with the levelling of standards and the increased attention to defensive organisation which, together, have made it easier to spot good teams. However, with the various refereeing crack-downs, both here and at USA 94, attacking football is back in fashion and

The Dutch may finally have found both the collective will and the talent to overcome Brazil tonight. By Glenn Moore

tonight, at the Stade Vélodrome, this World Cup's only two candidates for greatness – France being too impotent, Croatia too Machiavellian – take the stage.

Appropriately they are the modern-day heirs to the teams of Pele, Cruyff and Zico in the third major World Cup meeting between Brazil and the Netherlands. In 1974 a Cruyff-inspired Dutch team beat Brazil – then, as now, the holders – 4-0. The game marked the passing of a baton. "Their football," recognised Roberto Rivelino, a member of the '70 and '74 Brazilian sides recently, "caused a revo-

lution, it was totally different. We made that exit so the men behind could enter." But not to succeed. West Germany, blessed with great individuals but not a team to stir the soul, defeated the Dutch in the final.

The Dutch lost again, bitterly, to Argentina in 1978 then slumped until, four years ago, they reached the quarter-finals only to lose 3-2 to Carlos Alberto Parreira's relatively methodical, but ultimately successful, Brazilian side.

Now they meet again. Both have shown glimpses of the sort of football from which legends are made. For the Netherlands Dennis

Bergkamp, with country as with club, has been spasmodically brilliant. There have been cameos from Marc Overmars and Patrick Kluivert in attack, from Wim Jonk and Edgar Davids in midfield, from Frank de Boer in defence.

For Brazil, Ronaldo, despite doubts about his fitness and condition, has revealed his class when required; Rivaldo is growing into the heavy responsibility of bearing the No 10 shirt, Cafu and Roberto Carlos have shown flashes of fire on the flanks, and Dunga has confirmed the value of experience while demonstrating an underestimated ability to see and play a pass.

But, so far, they have flattered to deceive. For a change it is they who seem dis-united, not the Dutch. The team operates in parts, not as a whole and the tensions within surfaced when Dunga, who plays as if

raging against the dying of the light, clashed with Bebeto during the win over Morocco.

The Dutch appear to have a greater togetherness. Gus Hiddink has worked hard at integrating a side fissured along two lines. Culturally the white Dutch players have little in common with the black players of Surinamese descent. Professionally there has been a divide between the Ajax family and the outsiders, most of whom are from Hiddink's former team, PSV Eindhoven.

Hiddink's most crucial accommodation is with David. Thrown out in Euro 96, he is now an awesome presence. "We had some problems in '96 but they talked it out and it can't happen again," said Overmars. "Now the team spirit is good."

There are still little differences: the racial groups are said to have

had alternative recreational priorities in the pre-World Cup training camp in Switzerland, but they are minor. In a coincidental but timely feature, the *International Herald Tribune* yesterday made the point that, while there are racist feelings in the Netherlands, they are subdued and there is no support for any would-be Dutch version of Jean-Marie Le Pen, the French racist politician.

One unwanted bonus Hiddink has is that tragedy has introduced a sense of perspective. Jonk, though still playing football of clarity, is labouring under the pain of the death of his best friend mid-tournament. All have seen the fate of Winston Bogarde, a loner but not without friends, suffer a broken leg on Sunday just as Artur Numan's suspension opened the way for his chance. With specula-

tion at the Dutch training camp that Overmars will not be fit in time, it seems likely that either Philip Cocu will drop back with Boudewijn Zenden coming in for Overmars, or that Aron Winter will take over at right back as part of a more defensive formation. To balance this loss Brazil must bring in Ze Carlos, who was selling water melons, fixing cars and playing part-time a year ago, for the suspended Cafu.

While the English and the Germans create great teams by the force of collective will, the Dutch and Brazilians undermine great teams by the lack of it. This time, however, the Netherlands may have acquired the sense of purpose to go with their talent. With Brazil still torn between the desire to entertain and the need to win, the Dutch have the ability and ambition to take advantage.

Demons of Dallas fade as Leonardo finds liberty

A rash moment at USA 94 has haunted the brilliant Brazilian, who today can move closer to redemption. By Adam Sreter

THE WHEEL has come full circle for Leonardo Nascimento de Araujo. It is almost exactly four years to the day since the Brazilian midfield player was sent off after fracturing the skull of Tab Ramos of the United States in San Francisco during a second-round match at USA 94.

The incident occurred in the closing minutes of the first half. Leonardo lashed out as Ramos held on to him, catching the American player just above the ear. Ramos was out of action for three months, while Leonardo was given an unprecedented four-match ban, effectively expelling him from the tournament. That it happened on American soil, on 4 July, probably did not help his cause, but Leonardo has always denied intent.

"He was holding my arm and my natural reaction was to shake him off," he said at the time. "Unfortunately he was falling and I hit him in the face. It was only when I saw the reaction of the other players that I realised what had happened. I wasn't getting wozed up, I had no reason to be. We were enjoying our best spell of the game. To hit an opponent goes against my principles and all the things I stand for in football."

Leonardo's last statement has been born out by the way his career has unfolded since then, but he found few supporters at the time. The Brazilians, 1-0 winners, appealed in vain and went on, minus Leonardo, to the quarter-final five days later in Dallas – against the Netherlands. "It's funny how history repeats itself," Leonardo, now 29, said earlier this week. "I missed the chance to face the Netherlands then and now I'm getting another."

Despite that setback Leonardo, an attacking full-back in those days, was in great demand after the World Cup but he surprised many by choosing to move to Kashima Antlers in Japan. He was by no means the first Brazilian to take that road – his idol, Zico, played for the same club, going on to become technical director, which was

the main reason why Leonardo settled on the J-League club.

He enjoyed almost two seasons of rehabilitation there, setting Kashima Antlers on their way towards J-League title success in 1996. Always a popular figure in Japan, he learned enough Japanese to address his adoring fans on the occasion of his final match. More pertinently, his disciplinary record was exemplary.

He moved on to Paris St-Germain, where again he proved an instant success, so much so that Milan came in for him at the start of last season with an offer he could not refuse.

Once more, however, he bade farewell in style with a virtuous performance in what was almost his last game for PSG. Trailing 3-0 from the first leg of a European Champions' League preliminary round tie with Steaua Bucharest (PSG had actually lost 3-2 in Romania but were penalised for fielding a suspended player by mistake), the Brazilian inspired them to an unlikely 4-0 triumph back at the Parc des Princes.

In Italy Leonardo suffered along with many of his club-mates – Ibrahim Ba's poor form cost him his place in the French squad – as Milan struggled last season. Leonardo lost his place in the Brazilian side for the Confederations Cup in Riyadh earlier this year and he had to settle for a place on the bench for the opening match of France 98 against Scotland. However, he came on as a substitute that day, has kept his place in the side ever since and tonight's game against the Netherlands should mark his 45th cap for Brazil.

When the countries met in Dallas four years ago Brazil won 3-2, with Dennis Bergkamp among the scorers for the Dutch, and Leonardo foresees a similarly tight encounter tonight.

"It will be hard, given the way that the Dutch have gone from strength to strength," he said. "I'm surprised and impressed by the way some strong individuals have

managed to adapt to a collective mentality."

Having added French and English to his repertoire of foreign languages, with Italian probably to come, Leonardo has become something of a spokesman for his team-mates at this World Cup.

However, the bad memories of the last World Cup are still fresh enough in his mind that he would prefer not to dwell on the errors of his past.

Instead, he has been concentrating on cementing his place in Mario Zagallo's side so that, if

Brazil make the final this time, he will not miss out again.

"I hope we'll meet France in the final," he said, tempting fate just a little. "It is my adopted home. I like the people here, and the culture. But if we have to play them, we'll win."

DENNIS BERGKAMP took the pass in his stride and moved towards goal. A defender barred his way so he dropped a shoulder, executed a shimmy, and went to step past. But out snaked a foot and, in an instant, the ball was at Jaap Stam's feet instead. He strode into midfield and slid a pass into the path of a team-mate.

A scene from the Dutch training session yesterday evening at Aix-en-Provence and, Alex Ferguson hopes, one which will be repeated at Old Trafford and Highbury next year.

This is what Manchester United have paid £10m for, a defender who is good with his head in the cerebral sense as well as the aerial, who stays on his feet and is as capable in possession as in depriving somebody else of it.

Doubts have arisen, though, about his ability due to an unfortunate miss-kick against Mexico, which allowed Luis Hernandez an injury-time equaliser; a clumsy challenge which conceded

an unconvicted penalty to Yugoslavia, and for being at fault when Claudio Lopez beat the Dutch offside trap against Argentina. Although his distribution has been good it is beginning to look defensively as if United have brought a dud, with even Stam admitting that he has been surprised by the consistently high level of opponents.

This evening we can all judge for ourselves as he faces the best striker of them all, Ronaldo, a one-time team-mate at PSV Eindhoven. When they played together, in 1995-96, Ronaldo was a 17-year-old boy from Brazil, Stam a late-developer from the country. Now they meet in a World Cup semi-final at the Stade Vélodrome.

"He was just a kid," remembers Stam. "He was timid and didn't say much. But you could see at first sight that he had a terrific talent. You knew he would be very good."

Stam's future rise was less obvious. He did not turn professional until he was 19 and then it was with Second Division Zwolle, near Kampen, the small town of his birth. He moved to Cambuur Leeuwarden and Willem II Tilburg, each time under the tutelage of Theo de Jong, the former Netherlands international.

Finally, in 1995, he signed for PSV, as an ex-midfielder who had been converted into a right-back. Injuries meant he was rushed in at centre-back and it was the making of him. By the end of the season he was an international – albeit only for 10 minutes in a pre-Euro 96 friendly.

Though in the squad he did not play in the tournament, but then an outstanding display in a friendly earned him a run in the side. His opponent that day? Ronaldo.

"He is a great striker but I know what I have to do against him," said Stam. "I must mark him closely to prevent him turning with the ball. If he is allowed to do that, and to run at me, we will have problems because he is so quick and moves so easily through defences."

Stam plays with a yellow card

against him, received when he brought down Vladimir Jugovic – and conceded the first penalty given against him all season. "Another would put me out of the final," he admits, "but I can't think about that."

He feared he would be out of this game, and probably the Netherlands out of the competition, when Ariel Ortega tumbled over his foot in the closing minutes of the quarter-final. "I shut my eyes for a few seconds and waited with apprehension for the referee's decision. I wasn't certain that I hadn't committed a foul. After I'd seen it from various angles I could tell Ortega had dived over my leg. He deserved a yellow card. Fifa want to protect attackers but they must also think about defenders. They should make a film about the divers in this championship.

the Mexicans, especially Blanco, are particularly good." He exonerates Ronaldo from this charge, of whom he says approvingly: "He doesn't dive. He always tries to keep his feet."

Stam is unconcerned about the size of his fee, except to remark with astonishment that the commercial centre of his home town was recently sold for the same amount.

A Manchester United fan as a youngster with a liking, also, for Chris Waddle and Glenn Hoddle, he added: "I have seen Dutch players go to England, like Bergkamp and [Marc] Overmars, and do very well so I hope I do well also."

At present he has more pressing matters on his mind, with the main one being not the prospect of facing Ronaldo but the imminent birth of his first child. Stam has said that when his wife calls he will go home even if it means missing the final. This may be the reason, suggest Dutch observers, that his play has not been of the standard that led John Cruyff to call him "one of the best defenders in the world".

Manchester United fans may be relieved to know that the baby is due to arrive long before next season starts...



Brazil's Leonardo (right) shadows Ronaldo (foreground) in training yesterday

Stam aims to live up to his world record fee

Football's most expensive defender has other things on his mind as he prepares to face Brazil. By Glenn Moore

AP



Stam: Knows he must stay focused in tonight's semi-final

Laudrup ends international era

THE DANISH striker, Brian Laudrup, yesterday announced his retirement from international football and declared his intention to put all his efforts into making a success of his move to Chelsea.

The 29-year-old former Rangers player has decided to follow his older brother, Michael, in retiring from the national side following the Danes' 3-2 defeat by Brazil in last weekend's World Cup quarter-finals.

"I've got a footballing hangover. It's time for a younger player to take my place," said Laudrup, Jnr, who scored two goals in France 98.

"I'm stopping after one of the biggest matches – the

Danish team have ever played. I've had enough after reaching a World Cup quarter-final and winning the European title."

"It has nothing to do with the defeat. On the contrary, I'm proud of that game. I made up my mind after it. Now I want to concentrate on my club football with Chelsea, and my family."

Laudrup, who informed the Denmark coach, Bo Johansson, of his decision after the Brazil game, made his Denmark debut in 1987 and scored 21 goals in 82 internationals.

"I started at the age of 18, so I'm probably satisfied before the others," added

Laudrup, who turns 30 next February.

Laudrup said he intends to finish with all football at the end of his Chelsea contract. "The contract with Chelsea will be my last one," he said. "I made the decision six months ago, so it has nothing to do with the fact that my brother is also quitting all football now."

The coach who guided the Netherlands to the 1974 World Cup final, Rinus Michels, was in a "stable condition" in hospital yesterday after suffering a heart attack.

Michels, 70, was the mastermind of the Netherlands' "Total Football" philosophy of the 1970s and the man who

laid the foundations for Ajax's emergence as a major club, with their European cup successes of the early 1970s. He was rushed to hospital after being taken ill early on Sunday following the Netherlands' 2-1 quarter-final win over Argentina in Marseilles on Saturday.

"He is no longer in a critical condition, he is stable and our best wishes go to him," said a Fifa spokesman. Keith Cooper, who added that Michels – who had a heart bypass operation about 15 years ago – was expected to be able to leave hospital in a few days.

Known as "The General", and one of the most influen-

tial coaches of the last 25 years, Michels has also coached Barcelona. In 1988 he returned as the Netherlands' national coach and guided them to victory in that year's European Championship.

Daniel Passarella, the man in charge of the Argentina side that lost to the Netherlands at the weekend, may be replaced by Nestor Pekerman, but his decision is expected until next year. The president of the Argentine Football Federation, Julio Grondona, said he will not rush to judgement on picking a successor. "We have until 1 January to choose a new coach," he said.

Pekerman is the obvious

candidate for many, however, after his huge success with Argentina's junior teams over the past four years. He coached Argentina to the World Youth Cup in Qatar three years ago and retained the trophy in Malaysia last year. This May, his Under-21 team won the Toulon international tournament in France on the same day that his Under-17s won another event in Italy.

Those opposed to Pekerman had hoped Passarella might be replaced by the former international striker Carlos Bianchi, but this possibility appeared to evaporate when Bianchi was appointed coach of Boca Juniors.

RY

At present he has more pressing matters on his mind, with the main one being not the prospect of facing Ronaldo but the imminent birth of his first child. Stam has said that when his wife calls he will go home even if it means missing the final. This may be the reason, suggest Dutch observers, that his play has not been of the standard that led John Cruyff to call him "one of the best defenders in the world".

Manchester United fans may be relieved to know that the baby is due to arrive long before next season starts...

J'accuse: farce and fear taint a flawed finals

PRE-TOURNAMENT OPTIMISM is eroding. If the World Cup finals are about discovery - of great players, a great team, the state of the international game - then the shedding of a tear or two is in order.

Arguably things are much worse than that, for despite the odd glorious moment, a few wonderful contests, what France 98 has confirmed is that the contemporary game is unhealthy.

Forget the leader-writers and the idle observers commissioned to write on the feature pages. Forget also the drivel commentary of our television critics. *Theirs is a dismal view, which draws from a well of spite and ignorance.*

Think instead of those who remember World Cups past, for whom the game of football is glorious, the ordinary fan who can recall with authority another era, the age of Pele, Bobby Moore, Johan Cruyff, Bobby Charlton, Zico, Socrates, Paolo Rossi and Franz Beckenbauer, footballers who left their mark on World Cups past, setting the standard by which those aspiring to greatness today must be judged.

It was not just the way yesterday's heroes played. They looked the part. Those footballers were men of character, heroes by any standard. They were, in short, the reason why we follow football, why football is worth following.

Weakly in all other respects, we know for witnessing France 98 that the game today is impoverished where it matters most, in spirit. Ironically it is for the old fools in blazers that we should compose a lament. Nostalgic for Sir Stanley Rous? Sir Stanley was president of Fifa, football's world governing body, once upon a time, a bluff old codger, a figurehead of fun. But not the kind of politician-spiv who governs football today, frantically engaged in deals of one kind or another, to do with sponsorship, television rights and other corporate ventures.

Where Sir Stanley and his ilk presided benignly, those in Uefa, the



EAMON DUNPHY

merely serves to deny referees their most indispensable aid, discretion, and the exercise of their own common sense.

Common sense, justice, fair play, all are inextricably linked, all must be applied on a case by case basis. The absence of natural justice has characterised France 98 to the point of madness. Too many vital games have been defined by decisions taken by referees who are palpably afraid. No wonder players cheat. One does when justice is undermined.

If the tackle from behind is discredited, the elbow in the face offers an even more pernicious threat. If the skill of tackling is cast into disrepute, the black art of diving acquires commensurate value. Shirt-pulling becomes the vogue. Brazen obstruction goes unpunished, every game blighted by petty deceipts, the law as laid down by Blatter and Platini is a snide's charter, more threatening to the honest, maimed, challenge than the silly swallow dive to turf.

Bearing all of this in mind one reflects despairingly on the weekend's quarter-finals, and looks forward with trepidation to the tournament's conclusion this week. Of the four quarter-finals - in only one - Brazil against Denmark - has the football proved decisive. To their credit the Brazilians and the Danes concentrated on the business in hand, eschewing the nefarious. The best team won after a fight. From each of the other games a bad taste lingers, a sense that cynicism and ineptitude were the determining factors, football a casualty.

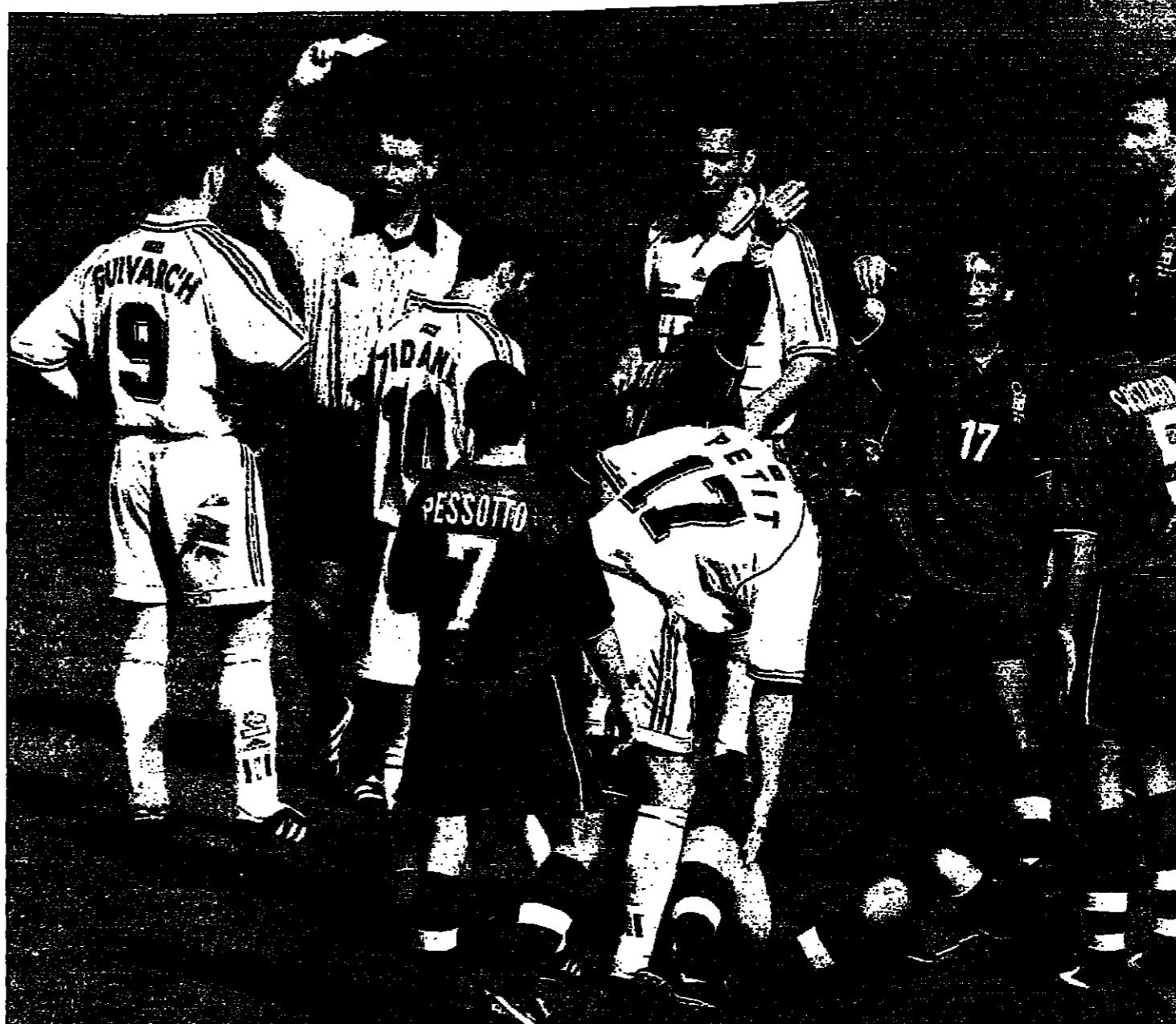
France deserved Friday's victory over Italy via the penalty shoot-out. But the football was a grim farce, remarkable for the Italians' persistent and flagrant fouling as they defended set-pieces in their own penalty area. Obstruction and shirt-pulling was the order of the day, the referee, Hugh Dallas from Scotland, affecting to be blind to the chaotic scenes, which bordered on farce, before his eyes.

When the France striker

Stephane Guivarch resorted to back-alley retaliation by smashing his elbow to the face of his principal tormentor, Fabio Cannavaro, Mr Dallas chose yellow instead of the more appropriate red card. A cameo of consistency, the issue avoided.

Yet consistency in their hotels players from other competing countries would watch and wonder, what was permissible, what was not. To which the only rational response was... whatever you could get away with.

When justice is a lottery anarchy is assured. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Germans felt hard done by when, 24 hours later, the full-back Christian Wörns was (justifiably) dismissed for a desperate lunge at the Croat Davor Suker, a master diver, who this time needed no excuse. That decision changed the game, Croatia proving surprisingly adroit at exploiting their extra man. It was, however, in a splendid con-



France's Stephane Guivarch escapes with a yellow card, rather than a red, from the Scottish referee, Hugh Dallas, after making contact with Italy's Fabio Cannavaro with his elbow during the quarter-final. *Reuters*

Stephane Guivarch resorted to back-alley retaliation by smashing his elbow to the face of his principal tormentor, Fabio Cannavaro, Mr Dallas chose yellow instead of the more appropriate red card. A cameo of consistency, the issue avoided.

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test on Saturday afternoon, between the Netherlands and Argentina, that the deplorable whimsy that is the consequence of the Blatter/Platini edict was most destructively evident. A wonderful World Cup quarter-final was reaching a suitably intense climax. The football was compelling, an engaging contrast in styles, a treat as sadly diminished by its subtlety: a hopelessly compromised Mexican referee who had issued a fistful of yellow cards, the implications of which began to bear inexorably upon him and the players in his charge.

Señor Brizio Carter might already have dismissed Jaap Stam, Roberto Sensini or Jose Chamot, all of whom he had shown a yellow card to earlier. Alas, with 13 minutes of the game remaining, it was the Netherlands' left wing-back, Artur Numan, who fell foul of Carter's neurosis.

Someone had to go and Numan

it was. Booked early in the first half, for a relatively innocuous challenge, the Dutchman was dismissed for a rash tackle on Diego Simeone. Compound injustice. Numan had been influential in turning the game in the Dutch's favour in the second-half. He is a notably clean player.

Perhaps with that in mind Mr Carter then felt obliged to compensate. In the event he did more than that. Argentina, with an extra man, began to reverse the flow of the game. The momentum was with the South Americans. Two minutes from time Ariel Ortega won possession, attacked Stam in the penalty area, and was fouled, unquestionably in my view, Carter, now the principal character in our story, deemed otherwise.

Frustrated, Ortega stuck his head in Dutch goalkeeper Edwin Van der Sar's face and joined Numan on the sidelines. A football match of true

World Cup final calibre was, thus, rendered a farce. There followed a moment of exquisite irony, by which this contest was decided, a template one could argue for all the perplexing folly of France 98: bemused and angry Argentina lost their concentration; Frank de Boer struck a magnificent 60-yard pass from his own half towards Dennis Bergkamp, who had found a yard of space between three defenders; the striker's first touch was perfect, his second elegantly elusive, his third an explosive volley to the corner of Argentina's net.

Bergkamp, the perfect hero for France 98, the perfect idol of the modern game: sneaky, selfish, vicious, brilliant. His wicked stamping of the Yugoslav Srdjan Milajevic was redeemed in a glorious instant. No justice.

For that France 98 must depend on Brazil tonight.



Football crazy.



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THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO FRANCE 98

TODAY'S MATCHES

Netherlands v Brazil

SEMI-FINAL STADE VELODROME, MARSEILLES. KICK-OFF: 20.00 BST

F. DE BOER	R. DE BOER	ZE CARLOS
DAVIDS	LEONARDO	ALDAIR
STAM	BERGKAMP	RONALDO
VAN DER SAR	COCU	BEBETO
JONK	KLUIVERT	CESAR SAMPAIO
REIZIGER	ZENDEN	TAFFAREL
		DUNGA
		JUNIOR BAIANO
		RIVALDO
		ROBERTO CARLOS
	PROBABLE TEAMS	

WEATHER: Scattered clouds. Temperature: 20C.

NETHERLANDS

1 Edwin van der Sar	Ajax
2 Michael Reiziger	Barcelona
3 Jaap Stam	PSV Eindhoven
4 Frank De Boer	Ajax
5 Arthur Numan	PSV Eindhoven
6 Wim Jonk	PSV Eindhoven
7 Ronald De Boer	Ajax
8 Dennis Bergkamp	Arsenal
9 Patrick Kluivert	Ajax
10 Clarence Seedorf	Real Madrid
11 Philip Cocu	PSV Eindhoven
12 Boudewijn Zenden	PSV Eindhoven
13 Andre Ooijer	Arsenal
14 Marc Overmars	Barcelona
15 Winston Bogarde	Barcelona
16 Edgar Davids	Juventus
17 Pierre Van Hooijdonk	Nottingham Forest
18 Ed De Goey	Chelsea
19 Giovanni Van Bronckhorst	Feyenoord
20 Aron Winter	Internazionale
21 Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink	Leeds
22 Ruud Hesp	Barcelona
coach: Guus Hiddink	

TEAM NEWS

NETHERLANDS: Artur Numan is suspended and his planned replacement, Winston Bogarde, is unavailable after breaking his leg in training on Sunday. Phillip Cocu is likely to move to left-back. Boudewijn Zenden is favourite to start in left midfield, with Marc Overmars (hamstring) a doubtful starter.

BRAZIL: Defender Cafu is suspended and will be replaced by Ze Carlos, who will be making his international debut.

Last five meetings: 31 Aug 1986 (Amsterdam, friendly); Netherlands 2 Brazil 2, 9 July 1994 (Dallas, WFC); Brazil 2, 1994 (Dallas, WFC); Brazil 3 Netherlands 2, 20 Dec 1998 (Barcelona, friendly); Netherlands 0 Brazil 1, 3 July 1974 (Dortmund, WFC); Brazil 0 Netherlands 2, 2 May 1963 (Amsterdam, friendly); Netherlands 1 Brazil 0.

BRAZIL

1 Cafu	Atletico Mineiro
2 Cafu	Roma
3 Aldair	Roma
4 Junior Baiano	Flamengo
5 Cesar Sampaio	Volohama Flugels
6 Roberto Carlos	Real Madrid
7 Giovanni	Barcelona
8 Dunga	Jubilo Iwata
9 Ronald	Internazionale
10 Rivaldo	Barcelona
11 Emerson Ferreira	Bayer Leverkusen
12 Carlos Germano	Vasco da Gama
13 Ze Carlos	Sao Paulo
14 Goncalves	Borussia
15 Andre Cruz	Milan
16 Ze Roberto	Flamengo
17 Donis	Poito
18 Leonardo	Milan
19 Denilson	Sao Paulo
20 Bebeto	Borussia
21 Edmundo	Florentina
22 Dida	Cruzeiro
coach: Mario Zagallo	

WORLD CUP BETTING

WITH THEIR bogey teams, Argentina and Norway, out of the tournament Brazil look like racing certainties to retain their World Cup title and can underline the point by dispatching the Netherlands (maybe 3-2) in what promises to be a goal feast in Marcellus this evening.

Brazil emerged triumphant on penalties after a dour goalless final against Italy in the United States in 1994, but their 1998 squad has a great deal more flair. Roberto Carlos, for instance, has revealed himself as a wing-back of awesome pace, skill and work-rate, while, as veteran captain Dunga controls the side in midfield, Rivaldo has emerged as the holders' most creative force.

Barcelona's most-prized asset put in another awesome display as Brazil beat Denmark 3-2 in the quarter-finals and promises to go home heralded as having been the player of the tournament.

It is a measure of the regard in which Ronaldo is held worldwide, that, despite scoring

three goals, many consider him to have been a bit of a disappointment so far.

However, the Internazionale striker turned provider in spectacular fashion against Denmark and although he has not pleased everyone with his lethargic movement off the ball so far, he is still worth siding with to come good when it matters. Ronaldo certainly looks the most likely first goalscorer and rates a fair bet at around 4-1.

The Netherlands look sure to provide stern opposition, particularly as Brazil do look highly susceptible at the back. Roberto Carlos's woeful attempt at an overhead clearance - which let Denmark in for their second goal in the quarter-final - typified their cavalier manner-and, with Brazil's wings-backs charging up the field, lumbering central defenders Aldair and junior Baiano do frequently look exposed at the back.

Dennis Bergkamp, Philip Cocu and Patrick Kluivert look sure to expose this weakness all night but Brazil, whose traditional method of defence is to rely on superior possession and pushing forward, should simply score more goals than they concede.

The Netherlands' defence is frankly frail. They let a two-goal lead slip against Mexico, almost let Yugoslavia in and, although it is hard to conjure up an image of exactly what a defender worth £10m would look like, it is pretty safe to say that Jaap Stam has not, thus far, provided said visual impression. It must be assumed that the management at Manchester United are purchased the Dutchman on sale or return.

Ian Davies

FIRST GOALSCORER

GOLDEN BOOT AWARD

TO WIN OUTRIGHT

SPREAD BETTING

NETHERLANDS v BRAZIL

Netherlands 1-0 Brazil 1-0

Draw 1-1 Brazil 1-1

Netherlands 1-1 Brazil 1-1



SPORT

NO LOOKING BACK FOR LEONARDO P25 • O'SULLIVAN'S DRUGS PENALTY P22

Obdurate Croft saves England

CRICKET

By DEREK PRINGLE
at Old Trafford

South Africa 552-5 dec
England 183 and 369-9
Match drawn

HOLD THE Prozac English cricket is alive and kicking and living in clover. Well, not exactly, but that would have been the feeling here yesterday when England, defying both the odds and Allan Donald, managed to cling on to an improbable draw.

Talk about leaving claw marks in cliff faces. Only Test cricket could throw up such a tense drama after England had been outplayed for all but one of the five days. Their survival, while unable to paper over deep-seated flaws, has at least kept the series open, though much soul searching, as well as some pruning, will have to be done before they gather at Trent Bridge in 10 days' time.

The tension during the final hour of play was immense, for both sides. Suddenly, a crowd that had booed England earlier began to bellow and cheer every ball that they kept out, as the drama, improbable 48 hours earlier, reached its climax.

When the third new ball was taken, England had lost eight wickets. That soon became nine when Darren Gough fell to a brute of a throat ball from

Donald. With two runs needed to make South Africa bat again, the last man, Angus Fraser, walked to the crease.

In what seemed an endless barrage from Donald, Fraser survived unbroken for 13 balls, while Robert Croft, as much a mainstay of this rearguard as his skipper Alec Stewart was with his 164, squeezed Makhaya Ntini into the covers for two to level the scores.

Although hardly ranking in the list of memorable shots, it meant that South Africa would have bat again, a move that saved England's last pair from having to face two extra overs – the number reduced for a change-over of innings.

Fittingly it was Croft, who had batted just over three hours for his unbeaten 37, who made the game safe, though he need not have faced the 87th over of the day from Paul Adams. Effectively the game had been saved when Fraser survived the last ball of the previous over, something neither umpire appeared to realise.

It was a fine performance from England's much maligned late middle-order. When Stewart's dismissal – half an hour after lunch – had caused the home side to slump from 293 for 3 to 296 for 6, all looked lost. But Croft, abetted by Gough and earlier Mark Ramprakash, kept the marauders at bay.

How frustrated Hansie Cronje and his men felt was not obvious, despite this being the second time they have allowed a down-and-out England to wriggle free. A difficult side to beat, the visitors have a reputation of not being able nail their men, and England's great escape will gnaw away for a while yet.

The South Africans are a reserved bunch and only Donald's disbelief at an lbw shout against Fraser – incidentally, missing leg stump – betrayed their edgy mood. Mind you, if anyone deserved a moment to air his grievances it was Donald, who bowled superbly to take 6 for 88, his best against England.

It could have been different for South Africa and they clearly missed the support bowling of Lance Klusener, though Peter Marrot's solid pitch offered little but some slow turn to Adams.

If the pitch was in England's favour, pressure still plays its tricks and the first breach of the day came just before noon.

Having become virtually becalmed by Donald's initial burst, it was with some relief that Michael Atherton latched on to a long hop from Jacques Kallis.

Two balls later a repeat of the shot found the top-edge of the bat instead of the middle, the bowler having put some extra height and pace on to the ball.

Even so, it took a marvellous running catch by Ntini at long leg, the fast bowler eventually making Atherton pay for his extravagance by holding the ball by his bootstraps. Tellingly it was not the first time Atherton has been duped like that in front of his home crowd.

No batsman, even Atherton, feels entirely comfortable blocking for the sake of it, and Ramprakash, like Stewart, clearly decided to be as positive as possible.

When he was last confronted by a similar situation in Antigua, survival alone had proved Ramprakash's undoing.

Stewart, meanwhile, the fluency and verve of his strokeplay betraying the parlous position of his team, brought up his 15. It is difficult for batsmen like Stewart to rationalise that runs do not really count in such situations, though in the end, by drawing level with South Africa's total, England

had 15 remaining.

Atherton's 50, 85 min, 121 balls, 8 fours, Stewart's 50, 85 min, 75 balls, 9 fours, 100; 229 min, 178 balls, 14 fours.

90; 379 min, 283 balls, 23 fours.

90;